This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

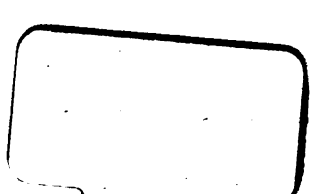
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HM 6154 3/95

Houghton Mifflin Textbook Collection
Gift of Houghton Mifflin Company

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
MONROE C. GUTMAN LIBRARY



3 2044 102 788 411

The Riverside Literature Series

MARJORIE DAW
GOLIATH
AND OTHER STORIES

BY

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · DALLAS
SAN FRANCISCO
The Riverside Press Cambridge

Hist.
T...
P...
PZ
3
.A365
Ma
1921

BIR 4031

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
MONROE C. GUTMAN LIBRARY

CONTENTS

MARJORIE DAW	5
THE LITTLE VIOLINIST	31
OUR NEW NEIGHBORS AT PONKAPOG	41
A CHRISTMAS FANTASY, WITH A MORAL	47
GOLIATH	59
THE CRUISE OF THE DOLPHIN	72

COPYRIGHT, 1885 AND 1893, BY THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH
COPYRIGHT, 1913 AND 1921, BY MARY ELIZABETH ALDRICH

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCE
THIS BOOK OR PARTS THEREOF IN ANY FORM

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE pleasant town of "Rivermouth" has become familiar to thousands who have never seen the old New Hampshire seaport where Thomas Bailey Aldrich was born, November 11, 1836. He first, with many vivid and loving touches, depicted its elm-shaded streets, spacious, old-fashioned dwellings, decaying warehouses, and crumbling wharves, haunted by a faint spicy odor, — the ghost of the dead West India trade, — in *The Story of a Bad Boy*, which we have the best authority for regarding as substantially autobiographical. In this delightful history is given as spirited and living a picture of its author's boyhood as could be desired. Taken in infancy to Louisiana, where his father had business interests, he returned to his grandfather's house in Portsmouth to pass his school days, and there, in 1852, when he was preparing to enter Harvard College, he received the news of his father's death in New Orleans. This loss changed his purpose, and he accepted a position in the banking-house of an uncle in New York.

But already the boy's aspirations were literary rather than commercial, and his earliest verses, after the manner of their kind, had appeared in the Poets' Corner of a local newspaper. Even during the three years he remained in his uncle's office, he became known as a not infrequent contributor to journals and magazines, and in 1855 he definitely connected himself with the *New York Evening Mirror*. From 1856 to 1859 he was assistant editor of the *Home Journal*, then under the charge of Mr. N. P. Willis, who gave to the work of his youthful associate a kindly appreciation and encouragement that the latter always held in grateful remembrance. In the early part of the Civil

War he was for a time attached to Blenker's Division, Army of the Potomac, as a newspaper correspondent.

He brought out several volumes of verse during these years, the earliest, *The Ballad of Baby Bell, and Other Poems*, having been issued when its author was but twenty. Always his own severest critic, he was peculiarly merciless in dealing with his juvenile poems; and in examining this little book and its immediate successors, but few verses will be found that have reappeared in later collections.

In 1865, Mr. Aldrich married, and removed to Boston to take charge of *Every Saturday*, a new weekly established by Ticknor & Fields, of which he remained editor until 1874. In the year first named an edition of his poems was brought out by the same publishers, in one of their little blue and gold volumes, a guise in which for a season nearly all American poets of repute were presented to the public, and it was no mean distinction for so young a writer to appear thus in company with the best names of the best period of American literature. Several of the verses in this volume, including *Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book*, were first printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*, to which Mr. Aldrich had been a contributor since 1860.

In 1869, *The Story of a Bad Boy* appeared as a serial in *Our Young Folks*, a juvenile magazine published by Ticknor & Fields. Of the vitality and truthfulness of this portrait of a healthy, happy, unspoiled boy, enthusiastic readers, old as well as young, have always been eager to testify. In writing, the author expressed his disbelief in the colorlessly perfect and docile youth, who then usually figured in narratives of the sort, — nowadays we are glad that Tom Bailey is not an invincible hero of a series of impossible adventures, or the general care-taker and adviser of his household. The genuine naturalness of the story, its pleasant humor, and its fine literary quality give it a perennial freshness, and have made it popular in many lands remote from its native New England.

Up to this time Mr. Aldrich may be said to have been known only as a poet, but during the succeeding ten years he was to win wide recognition as a story-writer and novelist. It was then that much began to be said and written about the excellence of the American short story, praises which must have been in no small part inspired by the publication of such little masterpieces as *Miss Mehetabel's Son*, *A Rivermouth Romance*, and *Marjorie Daw*, the last in especial, by its potent if elusive charm, gaining an instant popularity, exceptional in its extent and, it may be added, in its enduring quality. It gave name to a collection of stories and sketches published in 1873; and the same year appeared a new volume of verse, *Cloth of Gold*, followed three years later by *Flower and Thorn*. *Prudence Palfrey*, its author's first novel, was issued in 1874. The others are *The Queen of Sheba* (1877) and *The Stillwater Tragedy* (1880). A later volume of short stories, *Two Bites at a Cherry, and Other Tales*, was brought out in 1893, and another, *A Sea Turn and Other Matters*, appeared in 1902. In these works, whether novel, story, or sketch, we find that easy readableness which comes only from infinite pains on the part of the writer, a lucid style, free alike from mannerisms and affectations, and with a quite individual charm, naturalness of movement, and above all, a quiet but pervasive and spontaneous humor, with touches of simple and unforced pathos.

In 1881, as successor to Mr. W. D. Howells, Mr. Aldrich became editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, in which so much of his best work had first appeared, a charge which he resigned in 1890. In the early years of his Boston residence, he had established a country home at Ponkapog, a village whose rural charms are pleasantly touched upon in *Our New Neighbors*. For two years, during an absence of Mr. Lowell, he had been the tenant of Elmwood. In 1875 he had made a somewhat extensive European tour, destined to be the first of many similar wanderings and sojourns. It was from the earlier vivid impressions of certain places,

which use had not yet made over-familiar, that the agreeable travel-sketches collected in *From Ponkapog to Pesth* (1883) were written. Later journeys were of still larger scope, including two visits to Russia, of which traces may be found in his poems. Freedom from his editorial charge brought larger opportunities for travel, and in 1894–95 he made a journey round the world.

Always loyal to his birthplace, in *An Old Town by the Sea* (1893) he gives a picturesque description of the Portsmouth of history and tradition, as well as his own reminiscences of such survivals of its old life as still remained in his boyhood. His latest volumes of poems were *Mercedes, and Later Lyrics* (1883), *Mercedes* being a play in two acts, genuinely dramatic in form and spirit[1]; *Wyndham Towers* (1889), an Elizabethan story in verse, full of the atmosphere of the time, and containing passages of rare beauty, one of which, the song, *Sweetheart, Sigh no More*, is as charming a reproduction of the lyric of England's lyric age as these latter days are likely to give us; *The Sisters' Tragedy* (1890); *Unguarded Gates* (1895); *Judith and Holofernes* (1896); and *Judith of Bethulia*, a tragedy in four acts (1904). This last, Mr. Aldrich's second piece of stage-work, was produced at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, by Miss Nance O'Neil in 1904, and subsequently performed in our principal cities. His last prose volume was *Ponkapog Papers*, a collection of short sketches, published in 1903.

The degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon Mr. Aldrich by Yale (1881) and by Harvard University (1896); and that of Doctor of Letters by Yale (1901) and by the University of Pennsylvania (1905).

We may confidently predict that it is as a poet, and especially as a lyric poet, that Mr. Aldrich will be longest remembered. Some of his briefer poems, in which the

[1] The piece, with Miss Julia Arthur in the title rôle, was given at Palmer's Theatre, New York, in the season of 1895.

beauty of the thought is equaled by the exquisite form of the verse which gives it life, lines which once read linger always in the memory, must be among the things which remain. Thoroughly of New England as he was, he had the French feeling for literary form, the French grace and lightness of touch, qualities which have helped to make his *vers de société* easily the best in our literature. Having the true artist's reverence for his craft, he had little tolerance for careless, ill-considered work, least of all for any of his own that he found wanting. Popular favor never saved such delinquents from suppression, a course whose wisdom for the years, if not for the day, cannot be doubted.

In November, 1906, Mr. Aldrich celebrated the seventieth anniversary of his birth, and the appreciations and eulogies written upon that occasion united in marveling at the wonderful combination in his work of a purely poetic quality and a perfection of workmanship. To quote from one of them: "Aldrich belongs with the makers of pure song; the Herricks and Lovelaces, in whom American poetry has not been rich."

Aldrich's last poem was written in honor of the centenary of Longfellow's birth, and when his own death followed so closely after, on March 19, 1907, in Boston, there seemed a peculiar significance and appropriateness in reading those lines at the service held in his memory: —

"Above his grave the grass and snow
Their soft antiphonal strophes write:
Moonrise and daybreak come and go:
Summer by summer on the height
The thrushes find melodious breath.
Here let no vagrant winds that blow
Across the spaces of the night
Whisper of death.

They do not die who leave their thought
Imprinted on some deathless page.
Themselves may pass; the spell they wrought
Endures on earth from age to age.

And thou, whose voice but yesterday
  Fell upon charmèd listening ears,
  Thou shalt not know the touch of years;
Thou holdest time and chance at bay.
  Thou livest in thy living word
  As when its cadence first was heard.
O gracious Poet and benign,
  Belovèd presence! now as then
  Thou standest by the hearths of men.
Their fireside joys and griefs are thine;
  Thou speakest to them of their dead,
  They listen and are comforted.
They break the bread and pour the wine
Of life with thee, as in those days
  Men saw thee passing on the street
  Beneath the elms — O reverend feet
That walk in far celestial ways!"

MARJORIE DAW.

I.

DR. DILLON TO EDWARD DELANEY, ESQ., AT THE PINES, NEAR RYE, N.H.

August 8, 1872.

MY DEAR SIR: I am happy to assure you that your anxiety is without reason. Flemming will be confined to the sofa for three or four weeks, and will have to be careful at first how he uses his leg. A fracture of this kind is always a tedious affair. Fortunately the bone was very skilfully set by the surgeon who chanced to be in the drugstore where Flemming was brought after his fall, and I apprehend no permanent inconvenience from the accident. *Flemming is doing perfectly well physically;* but I must confess that the irritable and morbid state of mind into which he has fallen causes me a great deal of uneasiness. He is the last man in the world who ought to break his leg. You know how impetuous our friend is ordinarily, what a soul of restlessness and energy, never content unless he is rushing at some object, like a sportive bull at a red shawl; but amiable withal. He is no longer amiable. His temper has become something frightful. Miss Fanny Flemming came up from Newport, where the family are staying for the summer, to nurse him; but he packed her off the next morning in tears. He has a complete set of Balzac's works, twenty-seven volumes, piled up near his sofa, to throw at Watkins whenever that exemplary serving-man appears with his meals. Yesterday I very innocently brought Flemming a small

basket of lemons. You know it was a strip of lemon-peel on the curbstone that caused our friend's mischance. Well, he no sooner set his eyes upon those lemons than he fell into such a rage as I cannot adequately describe. This is only one of his moods, and the least distressing. At other times he sits with bowed head regarding his splintered limb, silent, sullen, despairing. When this fit is on him — and it sometimes lasts all day — nothing can distract his melancholy. He refuses to eat, does not even read the newspapers; books, except as projectiles for Watkins, have no charms for him. His state is truly pitiable.

Now, if he were a poor man, with a family depending on his daily labor, this irritability and despondency would be natural enough. But in a young fellow of twenty-four, with plenty of money and seemingly not a care in the world, the thing is monstrous. If he continues to give way to his vagaries in this manner, he will end by bringing on an inflammation of the fibula. It was the fibula he broke. I am at my wits' end to know what to prescribe for him. I have anæsthetics and lotions, to make people sleep and to soothe pain; but I've no medicine that will make a man have a little common-sense. That is beyond my skill, but maybe it is not beyond yours. You are Flemming's intimate friend, his *fidus Achates*. Write to him, write to him frequently, distract his mind, cheer him up, and prevent him from becoming a confirmed case of melancholia. Perhaps he has some important plans disarranged by his present confinement. If he has you will know, and will know how to advise him judiciously. I trust your father finds the change beneficial? I am, my dear sir, with great respect, etc.

II.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING, WEST 38TH STREET, NEW YORK.

August 9, 1872.

MY DEAR JACK: I had a line from Dillon this morning, and was rejoiced to learn that your hurt is not so bad as reported. Like a certain personage, you are not so black and blue as you are painted. Dillon will put you on your pins again in two or three weeks, if you will only have patience and follow his counsels. Did you get my note of last Wednesday? I was greatly troubled when I heard of the accident.

I can imagine how tranquil and saintly you are with your leg in a trough! It is deuced awkward, to be sure, just as we had promised ourselves a glorious month together at the sea-side; but we must make the best of it. It is unfortunate, too, that my father's health renders it impossible for me to leave him. I think he has much improved; the sea air is his native element; but he still needs my arm to lean upon in his walks, and requires some one more careful than a servant to look after him. I cannot come to you, dear Jack, but I have hours of unemployed time on hand, and I will write you a whole post-office full of letters, if that will divert you. Heaven knows, I have n't anything to write about. It is n't as if we were living at one of the beach houses; then I could do you some character studies, and fill your imagination with groups of sea-goddesses, with their (or somebody else's) raven and blonde manes hanging down their shoulders. You should have Aphrodite in morning wrapper, in evening costume, and in her prettiest bathing suit. But we are far from all that here. We have

rooms in a farm-house, on a cross-road, two miles from the hotels, and lead the quietest of lives.

I wish I were a novelist. This old house, with its sanded floors and high wainscots, and its narrow windows looking out upon a cluster of pines that turn themselves into æolian harps every time the wind blows, would be the place in which to write a summer romance. It should be a story with the odors of the forest and the breath of the sea in it. It should be a novel like one of that Russian fellow's — what's his name? — Tourguénieff, Turguenef, Turgenif, Toorguniff, Turgénjew — nobody knows how to spell him. Yet I wonder if even a Liza or an Alexandra Paulovna could stir the heart of a man who has constant twinges in his leg. I wonder if one of our own Yankee girls of the best type, haughty and *spirituelle*, would be of any comfort to you in your present deplorable condition. If I thought so, I would hasten down to the Surf House and catch one for you; or, better still, I would find you one over the way.

Picture to yourself a large white house just across the road, nearly opposite our cottage. It is not a house, but a mansion, built, perhaps, in the colonial period, with rambling extensions, and gambrel roof, and a wide piazza on three sides — a self-possessed, high-bred piece of architecture, with its nose in the air. It stands back from the road, and has an obsequious retinue of fringed elms and oaks and weeping willows. Sometimes in the morning, and oftener in the afternoon, when the sun has withdrawn from that part of the mansion, a young woman appears on the piazza with some mysterious Penelope web of embroidery in her hand, or a book. There is a hammock over there — of pineapple fibre, it looks from here. A

hammock is very becoming when one is eighteen, and has golden hair, and dark eyes, and an emerald-colored illusion dress looped up after the fashion of a Dresden china shepherdess, and is *chaussée* like a belle of the time of Louis Quatorze. All this splendor goes into that hammock, and sways there like a pond-lily in the golden afternoon. The window of my bedroom looks down on that piazza — and so do I.

But enough of this nonsense, which ill becomes a sedate young attorney taking his vacation with an invalid father. Drop me a line, dear Jack, and tell me how you really are. State your case. Write me a long, quiet letter. If you are violent or abusive, I'll take the law to you.

III.

JOHN FLEMMING TO EDWARD DELANEY.

August 11, 1872.

YOUR letter, dear Ned, was a godsend. Fancy what a fix I am in — I, who never had a day's sickness since I was born. My left leg weighs three tons. It is embalmed in spices and smothered in layers of fine linen, like a mummy. I can't move. I have n't moved for five thousand years. I'm of the time of Pharaoh.

I lie from morning till night on a lounge, staring into the hot street. Everybody is out of town enjoying himself. The brown-stone-front houses across the street resemble a row of particularly ugly coffins set up on end. A green mould is settling on the names of the deceased, carved on the silver door-plates. Sardonic spiders have sewed up the key-holes. All is silence and dust and desolation. — I interrupt this a moment, to take a shy at Watkins with the second volume of César Birotteau. Missed him! I think I

could bring him down with a copy of Sainte-Beuve or the Dictionnaire Universel, if I had it. These small Balzac books somehow do not quite fit my hand; but I shall fetch him yet. I've an idea that Watkins is tapping the old gentleman's Château Yquem. Duplicate key of the wine-cellar. Hibernian swarries in the front basement. Young Cheops up stairs, snug in his cerements. Watkins glides into my chamber, with that colorless, hypocritical face of his drawn out long like an accordion; but I know he grins all the way down stairs, and is glad I have broken my leg. Was not my evil star in the very zenith when I ran up to town to attend that dinner at Delmonico's? I did n't come up altogether for that. It was partly to buy Frank Livingstone's roan mare Margot. And now I shall not be able to sit in the saddle these two months. I'll send the mare down to you at The Pines — is that the name of the place?

Old Dillon fancies that I have something on my mind. He drives me wild with lemons. Lemons for a mind diseased! Nonsense. I am only as restless as the devil under this confinement — a thing I'm not used to. Take a man who has never had so much as a headache or a toothache in his life, strap one of his legs in a section of water-spout, keep him in a room in the city for weeks, with the hot weather turned on, and then expect him to smile and purr and be happy! It 's preposterous. I can't be cheerful or calm.

Your letter is the first consoling thing I have had since my disaster, ten days ago. It really cheered me up for half an hour. Send me a screed, Ned, as often as you can, if you love me. Anything will do. Write me more about that little girl in the hammock. That was very pretty, all that about the Dresden china

shepherdess and the pond-lily; the imagery a little mixed, perhaps, but very pretty. I did n't suppose you had so much sentimental furniture in your upper story. It shows how one may be familiar for years with the reception-room of his neighbor, and never suspect what is directly under his mansard. I supposed your loft stuffed with dry legal parchments, mortgages, and affidavits; you take down a package of manuscript, and lo! there are lyrics and sonnets and canzonettas. You really have a graphic descriptive touch, Edward Delaney, and I suspect you of anonymous love-tales in the magazines.

I shall be a bear until I hear from you again. Tell me all about your pretty *inconnue* across the road. What is her name? Who is she? Who's her father? Where's her mother? Who's her lover? You cannot imagine how this will occupy me. The more trifling, the better. My imprisonment has weakened me intellectually to such a degree that I find your epistolary gifts quite considerable. I am passing into my second childhood. In a week or two I shall take to India-rubber rings and prongs of coral. A silver cup, with an appropriate inscription, would be a delicate attention on your part. In the mean time, write!

IV.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 12, 1872.

THE sick pasha shall be amused. *Bismillah!* he wills it so. If the story-teller becomes prolix and tedious — the bow-string and the sack, and two Nubians to drop him into the Piscataqua! But truly, Jack, I have a hard task. There is literally nothing here — except the little girl over the way. She is

swinging in the hammock at this moment. It is to me compensation for many of the ills of life to see her now and then put out a small kid boot, which fits like a glove, and set herself going. Who is she, and what is her name? Her name is Daw. Only daughter of Mr. Richard W. Daw, ex-colonel and banker. Mother dead. One brother at Harvard, elder brother killed at the battle of Fair Oaks, ten years ago. Old, rich family, the Daws. This is the homestead, where father and daughter pass eight months of the twelve; the rest of the year in Baltimore and Washington. The New England winter too many for the old gentleman. The daughter is called Marjorie — Marjorie Daw. Sounds odd at first, does n't it? But after you say it over to yourself half a dozen times, you like it. There's a pleasing quaintness to it, something prim and violet-like. Must be a nice sort of girl to be called Marjorie Daw.

I had mine host of The Pines in the witness-box last night, and drew the foregoing testimony from him. He has charge of Mr. Daw's vegetable-garden, and has known the family these thirty years. Of course I shall make the acquaintance of my neighbors before many days. It will be next to impossible for me not to meet Mr. Daw or Miss Daw in some of my walks. The young lady has a favorite path to the sea-beach. I shall intercept her some morning, and touch my hat to her. Then the princess will bend her fair head to me with courteous surprise not unmixed with haughtiness. Will snub me, in fact. All this for thy sake, O Pasha of the Snapt Axle-tree! . . . How oddly things fall out! Ten minutes ago I was called down to the parlor — you know the kind of parlors in farm-houses on the coast, a sort of amphibious parlor, with sea-shells on

the mantel-piece and spruce branches in the chimney-place — where I found my father and Mr. Daw doing the antique polite to each other. He had come to pay his respects to his new neighbors. Mr. Daw is a tall, slim gentleman of about fifty-five, with a florid face and snow-white mustache and side-whiskers. Looks like Mr. Dombey, or as Mr. Dombey would have looked if he had served a few years in the British Army. Mr. Daw was a colonel in the late war, commanding the regiment in which his son was a lieutenant. Plucky old boy, backbone of New Hampshire granite. Before taking his leave, the colonel delivered himself of an invitation as if he were issuing a general order. Miss Daw has a few friends coming, at 4 P.M., to play croquet on the lawn (parade-ground) and have tea (cold rations) on the piazza. Will we honor them with our company? (or be sent to the guard-house.) My father declines on the plea of ill-health. My father's son bows with as much suavity as he knows, and accepts.

In my next I shall have something to tell you. I shall have seen the little beauty face to face. I have a presentiment, Jack, that this Daw is a *rara avis!* Keep up your spirits, my boy, until I write you another letter — and send me along word how's your leg.

V.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 13, 1872.

THE party, my dear Jack, was as dreary as possible. A lieutenant of the navy, the rector of the Episcopal Church at Stillwater, and a society swell from Nahant. The lieutenant looked as if he had swallowed a couple of his buttons, and found the bullion rather indigesti-

ble; the rector was a pensive youth, of the daffydowndilly sort; and the swell from Nahant was a very weak tidal wave indeed. The women were much better, as they always are; the two Miss Kingsburys of Philadelphia, staying at the Seashell House, two bright and engaging girls. But Marjorie Daw!

The company broke up soon after tea, and I remained to smoke a cigar with the colonel on the piazza. It was like seeing a picture, to see Miss Marjorie hovering around the old soldier, and doing a hundred gracious little things for him. She brought the cigars and lighted the tapers with her own delicate fingers, in the most enchanting fashion. As we sat there, she came and went in the summer twilight, and seemed, with her white dress and pale gold hair, like some lovely phantom that had sprung into existence out of the smoke-wreaths. If she had melted into air, like the statue of Galatea in the play, I should have been more sorry than surprised.

It was easy to perceive that the old colonel worshipped her, and she him. I think the relation between an elderly father and a daughter just blooming into womanhood the most beautiful possible. There is in it a subtile sentiment that cannot exist in the case of mother and daughter, or that of son and mother. But this is getting into deep water.

I sat with the Daws until half past ten, and saw the moon rise on the sea. The ocean, that had stretched motionless and black against the horizon, was changed by magic into a broken field of glittering ice, interspersed with marvellous silvery fjords. In the far distance the Isles of Shoals loomed up like a group of huge bergs drifting down on us. The Polar Regions in a June thaw! It was exceedingly fine. What did we

talk about? We talked about the weather — and *you!* The weather has been disagreeable for several days past — and so have you. I glided from one topic to the other very naturally. I told my friends of your accident; how it had frustrated all our summer plans, and what our plans were. I played quite a spirited solo on the fibula. Then I described you; or, rather, I did n't. I spoke of your amiability, of your patience under this severe affliction; of your touching gratitude when Dillon brings you little presents of fruit; of your tenderness to your sister Fanny, whom you would not allow to stay in town to nurse you, and how you heroically sent her back to Newport, preferring to remain alone with Mary, the cook, and your man Watkins, to whom, by the way, you were devotedly attached. If you had been there, Jack, you would n't have known yourself. I should have excelled as a criminal lawyer, if I had not turned my attention to a different branch of jurisprudence.

Miss Marjorie asked all manner of leading questions concerning you. It did not occur to me then, but it struck me forcibly afterwards, that she evinced a singular interest in the conversation. When I got back to my room, I recalled how eagerly she leaned forward, with her full, snowy throat in strong moonlight, listening to what I said. Positively, I think I made her like you!

Miss Daw is a girl whom you would like immensely, I can tell you that. A beauty without affectation, a high and tender nature — if one can read the soul in the face. And the old colonel is a noble character, too.

I am glad that the Daws are such pleasant people. The Pines is an isolated spot, and my resources are few. I fear I should have found life here somewhat monoto-

nous before long, with no other society than that of my excellent sire. It is true, I might have made a target of the defenceless invalid; but I have n't a taste for artillery, *moi*.

VI.

JOHN FLEMMING TO EDWARD DELANEY.

August 17, 1872.

For a man who has n't a taste for artillery, it occurs to me, my friend, you are keeping up a pretty lively fire on my inner works. But go on. Cynicism is a small brass field-piece that eventually bursts and kills the artilleryman.

You may abuse me as much as you like, and I'll not complain; for I don't know what I should do without your letters. They are curing me. I have n't hurled anything at Watkins since last Sunday, partly because I have grown more amiable under your teaching, and partly because Watkins captured my ammunition one night, and carried it off to the library. He is rapidly losing the habit he had acquired of dodging whenever I rub my ear, or make any slight motion with my right arm. He is still suggestive of the wine-cellar, however. You may break, you may shatter Watkins, if you will, but the scent of the Roederer will hang round him still.

Ned, that Miss Daw must be a charming person. I should certainly like her. I like her already. When you spoke in your first letter of seeing a young girl swinging in a hammock under your chamber window, I was somehow strangely drawn to her. I cannot account for it in the least. What you have subsequently written of Miss Daw has strengthened the impression. You seem to be describing a woman I have

known in some previous state of existence, or dreamed of in this. Upon my word, if you were to send me her photograph, I believe I should recognize her at a glance. Her manner, that listening attitude, her traits of character, as you indicate them, the light hair and the dark eyes — they are all familiar things to me. Asked a lot of questions, did she? Curious about me? That is strange.

You would laugh in your sleeve, you wretched old cynic, if you knew how I lie awake nights, with my gas turned down to a star, thinking of The Pines and the house across the road. How cool it must be down there! I long for the salt smell in the air. I picture the colonel smoking his cheroot on the piazza. I send you and Miss Daw off on afternoon rambles along the beach. Sometimes I let you stroll with her under the elms in the moonlight, for you are great friends by this time, I take it, and see each other every day. I know your ways and your manners! Then I fall into a truculent mood, and would like to destroy somebody. Have you noticed anything in the shape of a lover hanging around the colonial Lares and Penates? Does that lieutenant of the horse-marines or that young Stillwater parson visit the house much? Not that I am pining for news of them, but any gossip of the kind would be in order. I wonder, Ned, you don't fall in love with Miss Daw. I am ripe to do it myself. Speaking of photographs, could n't you manage to slip one of her *cartes-de-visite* from her album — she must have an album, you know — and send it to me? I will return it before it could be missed. That's a good fellow! Did the mare arrive safe and sound? It will be a capital animal this autumn for Central Park.

Oh — my leg? I forgot about my leg. It's better.

VII.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 20, 1872.

You are correct in your surmises. I am on the most friendly terms with our neighbors. The colonel and my father smoke their afternoon cigar together in our sitting-room or on the piazza opposite, and I pass an hour or two of the day or the evening with the daughter. I am more and more struck by the beauty, modesty, and intelligence of Miss Daw.

You ask me why I do not fall in love with her. I will be frank, Jack: I have thought of that. She is young, rich, accomplished, uniting in herself more attractions, mental and personal, than I can recall in any girl of my acquaintance; but she lacks the something that would be necessary to inspire in me that kind of interest. Possessing this unknown quantity, a woman neither beautiful nor wealthy nor very young could bring me to her feet. But not Miss Daw. If we were shipwrecked together on an uninhabited island — let me suggest a tropical island, for it costs no more to be picturesque — I would build her a bamboo hut, I would fetch her bread-fruit and cocoanuts, I would fry yams for her, I would lure the ingenuous turtle and make her nourishing soups, but I would n't make love to her — not under eighteen months. I would like to have her for a sister, that I might shield her and counsel her, and spend half my income on old thread-lace and camel's-hair shawls. (We are off the island now.) If such were not my feeling, there would still be an obstacle to my loving Miss Daw. A greater misfortune could scarcely befall me than to love her. Flemming, I am about to make a revelation that will

astonish you. I may be all wrong in my premises and consequently in my conclusions; but you shall judge.

That night when I returned to my room after the croquet party at the Daws', and was thinking over the trivial events of the evening, I was suddenly impressed by the air of eager attention with which Miss Daw had followed my account of your accident. I think I mentioned this to you. Well, the next morning, as I went to mail my letter, I overtook Miss Daw on the road to Rye, where the post-office is, and accompanied her thither and back, an hour's walk. The conversation again turned on you, and again I remarked that inexplicable look of interest which had lighted up her face the previous evening. Since then, I have seen Miss Daw perhaps ten times, perhaps oftener, and on each occasion I found that when I was not speaking of you, or your sister, or some person or place associated with you, I was not holding her attention. She would be absent-minded, her eyes would wander away from me to the sea, or to some distant object in the landscape; her fingers would play with the leaves of a book in a way that convinced me she was not listening. At these moments if I abruptly changed the theme — I did it several times as an experiment — and dropped some remark about my friend Flemming, then the sombre blue eyes would come back to me instantly.

Now, is not this the oddest thing in the world? No, not the oddest. The effect which you tell me was produced on you by my casual mention of an unknown girl swinging in a hammock is certainly as strange. You can conjecture how that passage in your letter of Friday startled me. Is it possible, then, that two people who have never met, and who are hundreds of miles apart, can exert a magnetic influence on each

other? I have read of such psychological phenomena, but never credited them. I leave the solution of the problem to you. As for myself, all other things being favorable, it would be impossible for me to fall in love with a woman who listens to me only when I am talking of my friend!

I am not aware that any one is paying marked attention to my fair neighbor. The lieutenant of the navy — he is stationed at Rivermouth — sometimes drops in of an evening, and sometimes the rector from Stillwater; the lieutenant the oftener. He was there last night. I should not be surprised if he had an eye to the heiress; but he is not formidable. Mistress Daw carries a neat little spear of irony, and the honest lieutenant seems to have a particular facility for impaling himself on the point of it. He is not dangerous, I should say; though I have known a woman to satirize a man for years, and marry him after all. Decidedly, the lowly rector is not dangerous; yet, again, who has not seen Cloth of Frieze victorious in the lists where Cloth of Gold went down?

As to the photograph. There is an exquisite ivory-type of Marjorie, in passe-partout, on the drawing-room mantel-piece. It would be missed at once if taken. I would do anything reasonable for you, Jack; but I've no burning desire to be hauled up before the local justice of the peace, on a charge of petty larceny.

P. S. — Enclosed is a spray of mignonette, which I advise you to treat tenderly. Yes, we talked of you again last night, as usual. It is becoming a little dreary for me.

VIII.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 22, 1872.

Your letter in reply to my last has occupied my thoughts all the morning. I do not know what to think. Do you mean to say that you are seriously half in love with a woman whom you have never seen — with a shadow, a chimera? for what else can Miss Daw to be you? I do not understand it at all. I understand neither you nor her. You are a couple of ethereal beings moving in finer air than I can breathe with my commonplace lungs. Such delicacy of sentiment is something that I admire without comprehending. I am bewildered. I am of the earth earthy, and I find myself in the incongruous position of having to do with mere souls, with natures so finely tempered that I run some risk of shattering them in my awkwardness. I am as Caliban among the spirits!

Reflecting on your letter, I am not sure that it is wise in me to continue this correspondence. But no, Jack; I do wrong to doubt the good sense that forms the basis of your character. You are deeply interested in Miss Daw; you feel that she is a person whom you may perhaps greatly admire when you know her: at the same time you bear in mind that the chances are ten to five that, when you do come to know her, she will fall far short of your ideal, and you will not care for her in the least. Look at it in this sensible light, and I will hold back nothing from you.

Yesterday afternoon my father and myself rode over to Rivermouth with the Daws. A heavy rain in the morning had cooled the atmosphere and laid the dust. To Rivermouth is a drive of eight miles, along

a winding road lined all the way with wild barberry-bushes. I never saw anything more brilliant than these bushes, the green of the foliage and the faint blush of the berries intensified by the rain. The colonel drove, with my father in front, Miss Daw and I on the back seat. I resolved that for the first five miles your name should not pass my lips. I was amused by the artful attempts she made, at the start, to break through my reticence. Then a silence fell upon her; and then she became suddenly gay. That keenness which I enjoyed so much when it was exercised on the lieutenant was not so satisfactory directed against myself. Miss Daw has great sweetness of disposition, but she can be disagreeable. She is like the young lady in the rhyme, with the curl on her forehead,

> "When she is good,
> She is very, very good,
> And when she is bad, she is horrid!"

I kept to my resolution, however; but on the return home I relented, and talked of your mare! Miss Daw is going to try a side-saddle on Margot some morning. The animal is a trifle too light for my weight. By the bye, I nearly forgot to say that Miss Daw sat for a picture yesterday to a Rivermouth artist. If the negative turns out well, I am to have a copy. So our ends will be accomplished without crime. I wish, though, I could send you the ivorytype in the drawing-room; it is cleverly colored, and would give you an idea of her hair and eyes, which of course the other will not.

No, Jack, the spray of mignonette did not come from me. A man of twenty-eight does n't enclose flowers in his letters — to another man. But don't attach too much significance to the circumstance. She gives sprays of mignonette to the rector, sprays to the lieu-

tenant. She has even given a rose from her bosom to your slave. It is her jocund nature to scatter flowers, like Spring.

If my letters sometimes read disjointedly, you must understand that I never finish one at a sitting, but write at intervals, when the mood is on me.

The mood is not on me now.

IX.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 23, 1872.

I HAVE just returned from the strangest interview with Marjorie. She has all but confessed to me her interest in you. But with what modesty and dignity! Her words elude my pen as I attempt to put them on paper; and, indeed, it was not so much what she said as her manner; and that I cannot reproduce. Perhaps it was of a piece with the strangeness of this whole business, that she should tacitly acknowledge to a third party the love she feels for a man she has never beheld! But I have lost, through your aid, the faculty of being surprised. I accept things as people do in dreams. Now that I am again in my room, it all appears like an illusion — the black masses of Rembrandtish shadow under the trees, the fireflies whirling in Pyrrhic dances among the shrubbery, the sea over there, Marjorie sitting on the hammock!

It is past midnight, and I am too sleepy to write more.

Thursday Morning.

My father has suddenly taken it into his head to spend a few days at the Shoals. In the meanwhile you will not hear from me. I see Marjorie walking in the

garden with the colonel. I wish I could speak to her alone, but shall probably not have an opportunity before we leave.

X.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 28, 1872.

You were passing into your second childhood, were you? Your intellect was so reduced that my epistolary gifts seemed quite considerable to you, did they? I rise superior to the sarcasm in your favor of the 11th instant, when I notice that five days' silence on my part is sufficient to throw you into the depths of despondency.

We returned only this morning from Appledore, that enchanted island — at four dollars per day. I find on my desk three letters from you! Evidently there is no lingering doubt in *your* mind as to the pleasure I derive from your correspondence. These letters are undated, but in what I take to be the latest are two passages that require my consideration. You will pardon my candor, dear Flemming, but the conviction forces itself upon me that as your leg grows stronger your head becomes weaker. You ask my advice on a certain point. I will give it. In my opinion you could do nothing more unwise than to address a note to Miss Daw, thanking her for the flower. It would, I am sure, offend her delicacy beyond pardon. She knows you only through me; you are to her an abstraction, a figure in a dream — a dream from which the faintest shock would awaken her. Of course, if you enclose a note to me and insist on its delivery, I shall deliver it; but I advise you not to do so.

You say you are able, with the aid of a cane, to

walk about your chamber, and that you purpose to come to The Pines the instant Dillon thinks you strong enough to stand the journey. Again I advise you not to. Do you not see that, every hour you remain away, Marjorie's glamour deepens, and your influence over her increases? You will ruin everything by precipitancy. Wait until you are entirely recovered; in any case, do not come without giving me warning. I fear the effect of your abrupt advent here — under the circumstances.

Miss Daw was evidently glad to see us back again, and gave me both hands in the frankest way. She stopped at the door a moment this afternoon in the carriage; she had been over to Rivermouth for her pictures. Unluckily the photographer had spilt some acid on the plate, and she was obliged to give him another sitting. I have an intuition that something is troubling Marjorie. She had an abstracted air not usual with her. However, it may be only my fancy. . . . I end this, leaving several things unsaid, to accompany my father on one of those long walks which are now his chief medicine — and mine!

XI.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 29, 1872.

I WRITE in great haste to tell you what has taken place here since my letter of last night. I am in the utmost perplexity. Only one thing is plain — *you* must not dream of coming to The Pines. Marjorie has told her father everything! I saw her for a few minutes, an hour ago, in the garden; and, as near as I could gather from her confused statement, the facts are these: Lieutenant Bradly — that's the naval officer

stationed at Rivermouth — has been paying court to Miss Daw for some time past, but not so much to her liking as to that of the colonel, who it seems is an old friend of the young gentleman's father. Yesterday (I knew she was in some trouble when she drove up to our gate) the colonel spoke to Marjorie of Bradly — urged his suit, I infer. Marjorie expressed her dislike for the lieutenant with characteristic frankness, and finally confessed to her father — well, I really do not know what she confessed. It must have been the vaguest of confessions, and must have sufficiently puzzled the colonel. At any rate, it exasperated him. I suppose I am implicated in the matter, and that the colonel feels bitterly towards me. I do not see why: I have carried no messages between you and Miss Daw; I have behaved with the greatest discretion. I can find no flaw anywhere in my proceeding. I do not see that anybody has done anything — except the colonel himself.

It is probable, nevertheless, that the friendly relations between the two houses will be broken off. "A plague o' both your houses," say you. I will keep you informed, as well as I can, of what occurs over the way. We shall remain here until the second week in September. Stay where you are, or, at all events, do not dream of joining me. . . . Colonel Daw is sitting on the piazza looking rather wicked. I have not seen Marjorie since I parted with her in the garden.

XII.

EDWARD DELANEY TO THOMAS DILLON, M.D., MADISON SQUARE, NEW YORK.

August 30, 1872.

MY DEAR DOCTOR: If you have any influence over Flemming, I beg of you to exert it to prevent his coming to this place at present. There are circumstances, which I will explain to you before long, that make it of the first importance that he should not come into this neighborhood. His appearance here, I speak advisedly, would be disastrous to him. In urging him to remain in New York, or to go to some inland resort, you will be doing him and me a real service. Of course you will not mention my name in this connection. You know me well enough, my dear doctor, to be assured that, in begging your secret coöperation, I have reasons that will meet your entire approval when they are made plain to you. We shall return to town on the 15th of next month, and my first duty will be to present myself at your hospitable door and satisfy your curiosity, if I have excited it. My father, I am glad to state, has so greatly improved that he can no longer be regarded as an invalid. With great esteem, I am, etc., etc.

XIII.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

August 31, 1872.

YOUR letter, announcing your mad determination to come here, has just reached me. I beseech you to reflect a moment. The step would be fatal to your interests and hers. You would furnish just cause for irritation to R. W. D.; and, though he loves Marjorie

devotedly, he is capable of going to any lengths if opposed. You would not like, I am convinced, to be the means of causing him to treat *her* with severity. That would be the result of your presence at The Pines at this juncture. I am annoyed to be obliged to point out these things to you. We are on very delicate ground, Jack; the situation is critical, and the slightest mistake in a move would cost us the game. If you consider it worth the winning, be patient. Trust a little to my sagacity. Wait and see what happens. Moreover, I understand from Dillon that you are in no condition to take so long a journey. He thinks the air of the coast would be the worst thing possible for you; that you ought to go inland, if anywhere. Be advised by me. Be advised by Dillon.

XIV.

TELEGRAMS.

September 1, 1872.

1. — To Edward Delaney.

Letter received. Dillon be hanged. I think I ought to be on the ground.

J. F.

2. — To John Flemming.

Stay where you are. You would only complicate matters. Do not move until you hear from me.

E. D.

3. — To Edward Delaney.

My being at The Pines could be kept secret. I must see her.

J. F.

4. — To JOHN FLEMMING.

Do not think of it. It would be useless. R. W. D. has locked M. in her room. You would not be able to effect an interview.

E. D.

5. — To EDWARD DELANEY

Locked her in her room. Good God. That settles the question. I shall leave by the twelve-fifteen express.

J. F.

XV.

THE ARRIVAL.

ON the second day of September, 1872, as the down express, due at 3.40, left the station at Hampton, a young man, leaning on the shoulder of a servant, whom he addressed as Watkins, stepped from the platform into a hack, and requested to be driven to "The Pines." On arriving at the gate of a modest farm-house, a few miles from the station, the young man descended with difficulty from the carriage, and, casting a hasty glance across the road, seemed much impressed by some peculiarity in the landscape. Again leaning on the shoulder of the person Watkins, he walked to the door of the farm-house and inquired for Mr. Edward Delaney. He was informed by the aged man who answered his knock, that Mr. Edward Delaney had gone to Boston the day before, but that Mr. Jonas Delaney was within. This information did not appear satisfactory to the stranger, who inquired if Mr. Edward Delaney had left any message for Mr. John Flemming. There *was* a letter for Mr. Flemming, if he were that person. After a brief absence the aged man reappeared with a Letter.

XVI.

EDWARD DELANEY TO JOHN FLEMMING.

September 1, 1872.

I AM horror-stricken at what I have done! When I began this correspondence I had no other purpose than to relieve the tedium of your sick-chamber. Dillon told me to cheer you up. I tried to. I thought that you entered into the spirit of the thing. I had no idea, until within a few days, that you were taking matters *au grand sérieux*.

What can I say? I am in sackcloth and ashes. I am a pariah, a dog of an outcast. I tried to make a little romance to interest you, something soothing and idyllic, and, by Jove! I have done it only too well! My father does n't know a word of this, so don't jar the old gentleman any more than you can help. I fly from the wrath to come — when you arrive! For oh, dear Jack, there is n't any colonial mansion on the other side of the road, there is n't any piazza, there is n't any hammock — there is n't any Marjorie Daw!

THE LITTLE VIOLINIST.

Weep with me all you that read
This little story;
And know, for whom a tear you shed,
Death's self is sorry.[1]

BEN JONSON.

THIS story is no invention of mine. I could not invent anything half so lovely and pathetic as seems to me the incident which has come ready-made to my hand.

Some of you, doubtless, have heard of James Speaight, the infant violinist, or Young Americus, as he was called. He was born in London, I believe, and was only four years old when his father brought him to this country about three years ago. Since that time he has appeared in concerts and various entertainments in many of our principal cities, attracting unusual attention by his musical skill. I confess, however, that I had not heard of him until last month, though it seems he had previously given two or three public performances in the city where I live. I had not heard of him, I say, until last month; but since then I do not think a day has passed when this child's face has not risen up in my memory — the little half-sad face, as I saw it once, with its large, serious eyes and infantile mouth.

I have, I trust, great tenderness for all children; but I know that I have a special place in my heart for those poor little creatures who figure in circuses and shows, or elsewhere, as "infant prodigies." Heaven help such little folk! It was an unkind

[1] The opening lines of the beautiful epitaph on Salathiel Parry, a child [choir boy] of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel.

fate that did not make them commonplace, stupid, happy girls and boys like our own Fannys and Charleys and Harrys. Poor little waifs, that never know any babyhood or childhood — sad human midges, that flutter for a moment in the glare of the gaslights, and are gone. Pitiful little children, whose tender limbs and minds are so torn and strained by thoughtless task-masters, that it seems scarcely a regrettable thing when the circus caravan halts awhile on its route to make a small grave by the wayside.

I never witness a performance of child-acrobats, or the exhibition of any forced talent, physical or mental, on the part of children, without protesting, at least in my own mind, against the blindness and cruelty of their parents or guardians, or whoever has care of them.

I saw at the theatre, the other night, two tiny girls — mere babies they were — doing such feats upon a bar of wood suspended from the ceiling as made my blood run cold. They were twin sisters, these mites, with that old young look on their faces which all such unfortunates have. I hardly dared glance at them, up there in the air, hanging by their feet from the swinging bar, twisting their fragile spines and distorting their poor little bodies, when they ought to have been nestled in soft blankets in a cosy chamber, with the angels that guard the sleep of little children hovering above them. I hope that the father of those two babies will read and ponder this page, on which I record not alone my individual protest, but the protest of hundreds of men and women who took no pleasure in that performance, but witnessed it with a pang of pity.

There is a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Dumb Animals. There ought to be a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Little Children; and a certain influential gentleman, who does some things well and other things very badly, ought to attend to it. The name of this gentleman is Public Opinion.[1]

But to my story.

One September morning, about five years and a half ago, there wandered to my fireside, hand in hand, two small personages who requested in a foreign language, which I understood at once, to be taken in and fed and clothed and sent to school and loved and tenderly cared for. Very modest of them — was it not? — in view of the fact that I had never seen either of them before. To all intents and purposes they were perfect strangers to *me*. What was my surprise when it turned out (just as if it were in a fairy legend) that these were my own sons! When I say they came hand in hand, it is to advise you that these two boys were twins, like that pair of tiny girls I just mentioned.

These young gentlemen are at present known as Charley and Talbot, in the household, and to a very limited circle of acquaintances outside; but as Charley has declared his intention to become a circus-rider, and Talbot, who has not so soaring an ambition, has resolved to be a policeman, it is likely the world will hear of them before long. In the meantime, and with a view to the severe duties of the professions selected, they are learning the alphabet, Charley vaulting over

[1] This sketch was written in 1874. The author claims for it no other merit than that of having been among the earliest appeals for the formation of such a Society as now exists — the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. — T. B. A.

the hard letters with an agility which promises well for his career as circus-rider, and Talbot collaring the slippery S's and pursuing the suspicious X Y Z's with the promptness and boldness of a night-watchman.

Now it is my pleasure not only to feed and clothe Masters Charley and Talbot as if they were young princes or dukes, but to look to it that they do not wear out their ingenious minds by too much study. So I occasionally take them to a puppet-show or a musical entertainment, and always in holiday time to see a pantomime. This last is their especial delight. It is a fine thing to behold the businesslike air with which they climb into their seats in the parquet, and the gravity with which they immediately begin to read the play-bill upside down. Then, between the acts, the solemnity with which they extract the juice from an orange, through a hole made with a lead-pencil, is also a noticeable thing.

Their knowledge of the mysteries of Fairyland is at once varied and profound. Everything delights, but nothing astonishes them. That persons covered with spangles should dive headlong through the floor; that fairy queens should step out of the trunks of trees; that the poor wood-cutter's cottage should change, in the twinkling of an eye, into a glorious palace or a goblin grotto under the sea, with crimson fountains and golden staircases and silver foliage — all that is a matter of course. This is the kind of world they live in at present. If these things happened at home they would not be astonished.

The other day, it was just before Christmas, I saw the boys attentively regarding a large pumpkin which lay on the kitchen floor, waiting to be made into pies. If that pumpkin had suddenly opened, if wheels had

sprouted out on each side, and if the two kittens playing with an onion-skin by the range had turned into milk-white ponies and harnessed themselves to this Cinderella coach, neither Charley nor Talbot would have considered it an unusual circumstance.

The pantomime which is usually played at the Boston Theatre during the holidays is to them positive proof that the stories of Cinderella and Jack and the Beanstalk and Jack the Giant Killer have historical solidity. They like to be reassured on that point. So one morning last January, when I informed Charley and Talbot, at the breakfast-table, that Prince Rupert and his court had come to town,

> "Some in jags,
> Some in rags,
> And some in velvet gown,"

the news was received with great satisfaction; for this meant that we were to go to the play.

For the sake of the small folk, who could not visit him at night, Prince Rupert was gracious enough to appear every Saturday afternoon during the month. We decided to wait upon his Highness at one of his matinées.

You would never have dreamed that the sun was shining bright outside, if you had been with us in the theatre that afternoon. All the window-shutters were closed, and the great glass chandelier hanging from the gayly painted dome was one blaze of light. But brighter even than the jets of gas were the ruddy, eager faces of countless boys and girls, fringing the balconies and crowded into the seats below, longing for the play to begin. And nowhere were there two merrier or more eager faces than those of Charley

and Talbot, pecking now and then at a brown paper cone filled with white grapes, which I held, and waiting for the solemn green curtain to roll up, and disclose the coral realm of the Naiad Queen.

I shall touch very lightly on the literary aspects of the play. Its plot, like that of the realistic novel, was of so subtile a nature as not to be visible to the naked eye. I doubt if the dramatist himself could have explained it, even if he had been so condescending as to attempt to do so. There was a bold young prince — Prince Rupert, of course — who went into Wonderland in search of adventures. He reached Wonderland by leaping from the castle of Drachenfels into the Rhine. Then there was one Snaps, the prince's valet, who did not in the least want to go, but went, and got terribly frightened by the Green Demons of the Chrysolite Cavern, which made us all laugh — it being such a pleasant thing to see somebody else scared nearly to death. Then there were knights in brave tin armor, and armies of fair pre-Raphaelite Amazons in all the colors of the rainbow, and troops of unhappy slave-girls, who did nothing but smile and wear beautiful dresses, and dance continually to the most delightful music. Now you were in an enchanted castle on the banks of the Rhine, and now you were in a cave of amethysts and diamonds at the bottom of the river — scene following scene with such bewildering rapidity that finally you did not quite know where you were.

But what interested me most, and what pleased Charley and Talbot even beyond the Naiad Queen herself, was the little violinist who came to the German Court, and played before Prince Rupert and his bride.

It was such a little fellow! He was not more than a year older than my own boys, and not much taller. He had a very sweet, sensitive face, with large gray eyes, in which there was a deep-settled expression that I do not like to see in a child. Looking at his eyes alone, you would have said he was sixteen or seventeen, and he was merely a baby!

I do not know enough of music to assert that he had wonderful genius, or any genius at all; but it seemed to me he played charmingly, and with the touch of a natural musician.

At the end of his piece, he was lifted over the foot-lights of the stage into the orchestra, where, with the conductor's *bâton* in his hand, he directed the musicians in playing one or two difficult compositions. In this he evinced a carefully trained ear and a perfect understanding of the music.

I wanted to hear the little violin again; but as he made his bow to the audience and ran off, it was with a half-wearied air, and I did not join with my neighbors in calling him back. "There 's another performance to-night," I reflected, "and the little fellow is n't very strong." He came out, however, and bowed, but did not play again.

All the way home from the theatre my children were full of the little violinist, and as they went along, chattering and frolicking in front of me, and getting under my feet like a couple of young spaniels (they did not look unlike two small brown spaniels, with their fur-trimmed overcoats and sealskin caps and ear-lappets), I could not help thinking how different the poor little musician's lot was from theirs.

He was only six years and a half old, and had been before the public nearly two years. What hours of

toil and weariness he must have been passing through at the very time when my little ones were being rocked and petted and shielded from every ungentle wind that blows! And what an existence was his now — travelling from city to city, practising at every spare moment, and performing night after night in some close theatre or concert-room when he should be drinking in that deep, refreshing slumber which childhood needs! However much he was loved by those who had charge of him, and they must have treated him kindly, it was a hard life for the child.

He ought to have been turned out into the sunshine; that pretty violin — one can easily understand that he was fond of it himself — ought to have been taken away from him, and a kite-string placed in his hand instead. If God had set the germ of a great musician or a great composer in that slight body, surely it would have been wise to let the precious gift ripen and flower in its own good season.

This is what I thought, walking home in the amber glow of the wintry sunset; but my boys saw only the bright side of the tapestry, and would have liked nothing better than to change places with little James Speaight. To stand in the midst of Fairyland, and play beautiful tunes on a toy fiddle, while all the people clapped their hands — what could quite equal that? Charley began to think it was no such grand thing to be a circus-rider, and the dazzling career of policeman had lost something of its glamour in the eyes of Talbot.

It is my custom every night, after the children are snug in their nest and the gas is turned down, to sit on the side of the bed and chat with them five or ten minutes. If anything has gone wrong through the

day, it is never alluded to at this time. None but the most agreeable topics are discussed. I make it a point that the boys shall go to sleep with untroubled hearts. When our chat is ended, they say their prayers. Now, among the pleas which they offer up for the several members of the family, they frequently intrude the claims of rather curious objects for Divine compassion. Sometimes it is the rocking-horse that has broken a leg, sometimes it is Shem or Japhet, who has lost an arm in disembarking from Noah's ark; Pinky and Inky, the kittens, and Rob, the dog, are never forgotten.

So it did not surprise me at all this Saturday night when both boys prayed God to watch over and bless the little violinist.

The next morning at the breakfast-table, when I unfolded the newspaper, the first paragraph my eyes fell upon was this —

"James Speaight, the infant violinist, died in this city late on Saturday night. At the matinée of the Naiad Queen, on the afternoon of that day, when little James Speaight came off the stage, after giving his usual violin performance, Mr. Shewell [1] noticed that he appeared fatigued, and asked if he felt ill. He replied that he had a pain in his heart, and then Mr. Shewell suggested that he remain away from the evening performance. He retired quite early, and about midnight his father heard him say, '*Gracious God, make room for another little child in heaven.*' No sound was heard after this, and his father spoke to him soon afterwards; he received no answer, but found his child dead."

The printed letters grew dim and melted into one

[1] The stage-manager.

another, as I tried to re-read them. I glanced across the table at Charley and Talbot eating their breakfast, with the slanted sunlight from the window turning their curls into real gold, and I had not the heart to tell them what had happened.

Of all the prayers that floated up to heaven, that Saturday night, from the bedsides of sorrowful men and women, or from the cots of innocent children, what accents could have fallen more piteously and tenderly upon the ear of a listening angel than the prayer of little James Speaight! He knew he was dying. The faith he had learned, perhaps while running at his mother's side, in some green English lane, came to him then. He remembered it was Christ who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me;"[1] and the beautiful prayer rose to his lips, "Gracious God, make room for another little child in heaven."

I folded up the newspaper silently, and throughout the day I did not speak before the boys of the little violinist's death; but when the time came for our customary chat in the nursery, I told the story to Charley and Talbot. I do not think that they understood it very well, and still less did they understand why I lingered so much longer than usual by their bedside that Sunday night.

As I sat there in the dimly lighted room, it seemed to me that I could hear, in the pauses of the winter wind, faintly and doubtfully somewhere in the distance, the sound of the little violin.

Ah, that little violin! — a cherished relic now. Perhaps it plays soft, plaintive airs all by itself, in the place where it is kept, missing the touch of the baby fingers which used to waken it into life!

[1] See Mark x. 14.

OUR NEW NEIGHBORS AT PONKAPOG.

WHEN I saw the little house building, an eighth of a mile beyond my own, on the Old Bay Road, I wondered who were to be the tenants. The modest structure was set well back from the road, among the trees, as if the inmates were to care nothing whatever for a view of the stylish equipages which sweep by during the summer season. For my part, I like to see the passing, in town or country; but each has his own unaccountable taste. The proprietor, who seemed to be also the architect of the new house, superintended the various details of the work with an assiduity that gave me a high opinion of his intelligence and executive ability, and I congratulated myself on the prospect of having some very agreeable neighbors.

It was quite early in the spring, if I remember, when they moved into the cottage — a newly married couple, evidently: the wife very young, pretty, and with the air of a lady; the husband somewhat older, but still in the first flush of manhood. It was understood in the village that they came from Baltimore; but no one knew them personally, and they brought no letters of introduction. (For obvious reasons I refrain from mentioning names.) It was clear that, for the present at least, their own company was entirely sufficient for them. They made no advances toward the acquaintance of any of the families in the neighborhood, and consequently were left to themselves. That, apparently, was what they desired, and why they came to Ponkapog. For after its black bass and wild duck and teal, solitude is the chief staple of Ponkapog. Perhaps its perfect rural loveliness should

be included. Lying high up under the wing of the Blue Hills, and in the odorous breath of pines and cedars, it chances to be the most enchanting bit of unlaced dishevelled country within fifty miles of Boston, which, moreover, can be reached in half an hour's ride by railroad. But the nearest railroad station (Heaven be praised!) is two miles distant, and the seclusion is without a flaw. Ponkapog has one mail a day; two mails a day would break the charm.

The village — it looks like a compact village at a distance, but unravels and disappears the moment you drive into it — has quite a large floating population. I do not allude to the perch and pickerel in Ponkapog Pond. Along the Old Bay Road, a highway even in the colonial days, there are a number of attractive villas and cottages straggling off towards Milton, which are occupied for the summer by persons from the city. These birds of passage are a distinct class from the permanent inhabitants, and the two seldom closely assimilate unless there has been some previous connection. It seemed to me that our new neighbors were to come under the head of permanent inhabitants; they had built their own house, and had the air of intending to live in it all the year round.

"Are you not going to call on them?" I asked my wife one morning.

"When they call on *us*," she replied lightly.

"But it is our place to call first, they being strangers."

This was said as seriously as the circumstance demanded; but my wife turned it off with a laugh, and I said no more, always trusting to her intuitions in these matters.

She was right. She would not have been received,

and a cool "Not at home" would have been a bitter social pill to us if we had gone out of our way to be courteous.

I saw a great deal of our neighbors, nevertheless. Their cottage lay between us and the post-office — where *he* was never to be met with by any chance — and I caught frequent glimpses of the two working in the garden. Floriculture did not appear so much an object as exercise. Possibly it was neither; may be they were engaged in digging for specimens of those arrowheads and flint hatchets which are continually coming to the surface hereabouts. There is scarcely an acre in which the ploughshare has not turned up some primitive stone weapon or domestic utensil, disdainfully left to us by the red men who once held this domain — an ancient tribe called the Punkypoags, a forlorn descendant of which, one Polly Crowd, figures in the annual Blue Book, down to the close of the Southern war, as a state pensioner. At that period she appears to have struck a trail to the Happy Hunting Grounds. I quote from the local historiographer.

Whether they were developing a kitchen-garden, or emulating Professor Schliemann[1] at Mycenæ, the new-comers were evidently persons of refined musical taste: the lady had a contralto voice of remarkable sweetness, although of no great compass, and I used often to linger of a morning by the high gate and listen to her executing an arietta, conjecturally at some window upstairs, for the house was not visible from the turnpike. The husband, somewhere about

[1] Heinrich Schliemann (1822–1890), a distinguished archæologist, who explored and excavated the site of ancient Troy, and later made similar researches at Mycenæ, his discoveries being of great interest and importance.

the grounds, would occasionally respond with two or three bars. It was all quite an ideal, Arcadian business. They seemed very happy together, these two persons, who asked no odds whatever of the community in which they had settled themselves.

There was a queerness, a sort of mystery, about this couple which I admit piqued my curiosity, though as a rule I have no morbid interest in the affairs of my neighbors. They behaved like a pair of lovers who had run off and got married clandestinely. I willingly acquitted them, however, of having done anything unlawful; for, to change a word in the lines of the poet —

> "It is a joy to *think* the best
> We may of human kind."

Admitting the hypothesis of elopement, there was no mystery in their neither sending nor receiving letters. But where did they get their groceries? I do not mean the money to pay for them — that is an enigma apart — but the groceries themselves. No express wagon, no butcher's cart, no vehicle of any description, was ever observed to stop at their domicile. Yet they did not order family stores at the sole establishment in the village — an inexhaustible little bottle of a shop which, I advertise it gratis, can turn out anything in the way of groceries, from a handsaw to a pocket-handkerchief. I confess that I allowed this unimportant detail of their *ménage* to occupy more of my speculation than was creditable to me.

In several respects our neighbors reminded me of those inexplicable persons we sometimes come across in great cities, though seldom or never in suburban places, where the field may be supposed too restricted for their operations — persons who have no percep-

tible means of subsistence, and manage to live royally on nothing a year. They hold no government bonds, they possess no real estate (our neighbors did own their house), they toil not, neither do they spin; yet they reap all the numerous soft advantages that usually result from honest toil and skilful spinning. How do they do it? But this is a digression, and I am quite of the opinion of the old lady in "David Copperfield,"[1] who says, "Let us have no meandering!"

Though my wife had declined to risk a ceremonious call on our neighbors as a family, I saw no reason why I should not speak to the husband as an individual, when I happened to encounter him by the wayside. I made several approaches to do so, when it occurred to my penetration that my neighbor had the air of trying to avoid me. I resolved to put the suspicion to the test, and one forenoon, when he was sauntering along on the opposite side of the road, in the vicinity of Fisher's sawmill, I deliberately crossed over to address him. The brusque manner in which he hurried away was not to be misunderstood. Of course I was not going to force myself upon him.

It was at this time that I began to formulate uncharitable suppositions touching our neighbors, and would have been as well pleased if some of my choicest fruit trees had not overhung their wall. I determined to keep my eyes open later in the season, when the fruit should be ripe to pluck. In some folks, a sense of the delicate shades of difference between *meum* and *tuum* does not seem to be very strongly developed in the Moon of Cherries, to use the old Indian phrase.

I was sufficiently magnanimous not to impart any

[1] One of the best, if not the best, of the novels of Dickens.

of these sinister impressions to the families with whom we were on visiting terms; for I despise a gossip. I would say nothing against the persons up the road until I had something definite to say. My interest in them was — well, not exactly extinguished, but burning low. I met the gentleman at intervals, and passed him without recognition; at rarer intervals I saw the lady.

After a while I not only missed my occasional glimpses of her pretty, slim figure, always draped in some soft black stuff with a bit of something bright at the throat, but I inferred that she did not go about the house singing in her light-hearted manner, as formerly. What had happened? Had the honeymoon suffered eclipse already? Was she ill? I fancied she was ill, and that I detected a certain anxiety in the husband, who spent the mornings digging solitarily in the garden, and seemed to have relinquished those long jaunts to the brow of Blue Hill, where there is a superb view of all Norfolk County combined with sundry venerable rattlesnakes with twelve rattles.

As the days went by it became certain that the lady was confined to the house, perhaps seriously ill, possibly a confirmed invalid. Whether she was attended by a physician from Canton or from Milton, I was unable to say; but neither the gig with the large allopathic sorrel horse, nor the gig with the homœopathic white mare, was ever seen hitched at the gate during the day. If a physician had charge of the case, he visited his patient only at night. All this moved my sympathy, and I reproached myself with having had hard thoughts of our neighbors. Trouble had come to them early. I would have

liked to offer them such small, friendly services as lay in my power, but the memory of the repulse I had sustained still rankled in me. So I hesitated.

One morning my two boys burst into the library with their eyes sparkling.

"You know the old elm down the road?" cried one.

"Yes."

"The elm with the hang-bird's nest?" shrieked the other.

"Yes, yes — the Baltimore oriole."

"Well, we both just climbed up, and there 's three young ones in it!"

Then I smiled to think that our new neighbors had got such a promising little family.

A CHRISTMAS FANTASY, WITH A MORAL.

Her name was Mildred Wentworth, and she lived on the slope of Beacon Hill, in one of those old-fashioned swell-front houses which have the inestimable privilege of looking upon Boston Common. It was Christmas afternoon, and she had gone up to the blue room, on the fourth floor, in order to make a careful inspection in solitude of the various gifts that had been left in her slender stocking and at her bedside the previous night.

Mildred was in some respects a very old child for her age, which she described as being "half past seven," and had a habit of spending hours alone in the large front chamber occupied by herself and the governess. This day the governess had gone to keep Christmas with her own family in South Boston, and

it so chanced that Mildred had been left to dispose of her time as she pleased during the entire afternoon. She was well content to have the opportunity, for fortune had treated her magnificently, and it was deep satisfaction, after the excitement of the morning, to sit in the middle of that spacious room, with its three windows overlooking the pearl-crusted trees in the Common, and examine her treasures without any chance of interruption.

The looms of Cashmere and the workshops of Germany, the patient Chinaman and the irresponsible polar bear, had alike contributed to those treasures. Among other articles was a small square box, covered with mottled paper and having an outlandish, mysterious aspect, as if it belonged to a magician. When you loosened the catch of this box, possibly supposing it to contain bonbons of a superior quality, there sprang forth a terrible little monster, with a drifting white beard like a snow-storm, round emerald-green eyes, and a pessimistic expression of countenance generally, as though he had been reading Tolstoi [1] or Schopenhauer.[2]

This abrupt personage, whose family name was Heliogabalus, was known for simplicity's sake as Jumping Jack; and though the explanation of the matter is beset with difficulties, it is not to be concealed that he held a higher place in the esteem of Miss Wentworth than any of her other possessions, not excluding a tall wax doll with a pallid complexion and a profusion of blonde hair. Titania was not

[1] Count Leo Nikolaiëvitch Tolstoi (b. 1828), a distinguished Russian novelist and social reformer.

[2] Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), a celebrated German philosopher, and the principal expounder of modern Pessimism.

more in love with Nick Bottom [1] the weaver than Mildred with Jumping Jack. It was surely not his personal beauty that won her, for he had none; it was not his intellect, for intellect does not take up its abode in a forehead of such singular construction as that of Jumping Jack. But whatever the secret charm was, it worked. On a more realistic stage than this we see analogous cases every day. Perhaps Oberon still exercises his fairy craft in our material world, and scatters at will upon the eyelids of mortals the magic distillation of that "little Western flower" which

> "Will make or man or woman madly dote
> Upon the next live creature that it sees." [2]

For an hour or so Mildred amused herself sufficiently by shutting Heliogabalus up in the box and letting him spring out again; then she grew weary of the diversion, and finally began to lose patience with her elastic companion because he was unable to crowd himself into the box and undo the latch with his own fingers. This was extremely unreasonable; but so was Mildred made.

"How tedious you are!" she cried, at last. "You dull little old man, I don't see how I ever came to like you. I don't like you any more, with your glass eyes, and your silly pink mouth always open and never saying the least thing. What do you mean, sir, by standing and staring at me in that tiresome way? You look enough like Dobbs the butcher to be his

[1] In Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon, King of the Fairies, having quarrelled with his queen, Titania, by magic arts makes her fall in love with a clown.

[2] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act II. Scene 1.

brother, or to be Dobbs himself. I wonder you don't up and say, 'Steaks or chops, mum?' Dear me! I wish you really had some life in you, and could move about, and talk with me, and make yourself agreeable. Do be alive!"

Mildred gave a little laugh at her own absurdity, and then, being an imaginative creature, came presently to regard the idea as not altogether absurd, and, finally, as not absurd at all. If a bough that has been frozen to death all winter can put forth blossoms in the spring, why might not an inanimate object, which already possessed many of the surface attributes of humanity, and possibly some of the internal mechanism, add to itself the crowning gift of speech? In view of the daily phenomena of existence, would that be so very astonishing? Of course the problem took a simpler shape than this in Mildred's unsophisticated thought.

She folded her hands in her lap, and, rocking to and fro, reflected how pleasant it would be if Jumping Jack, or her doll, could come to life, like the marble lady in the play,[1] and do some of the talking. What wonderful stories Jumping Jack would have to tell, for example. He must have had no end of remarkable adventures before he lost his mind. Probably the very latest intelligence from Lilliput[2] was in his possession, and perhaps he was even now vainly trying to deliver himself of it. His fixed, open mouth hinted as much. The Land of the Pygmies, in the

[1] A play founded upon the classic story of Pygmalion, who carved an image of a beautiful maiden, to which, in answer to his prayers, a goddess gave life.

[2] The country of the little people described in Swift's well-known work, *Gulliver's Travels*.

heart of Darkest Africa[1] — just then widely discussed in the newspapers — was of course familiar ground to him. How interesting it would be to learn, at first hand, of the manners and customs of those little folk. Doubtless he had been a great traveller in foreign parts; the label, in German text, on the bottom of his box showed that he had recently come from Munich. Munich! What magic there was in the very word! As Mildred rocked to and fro, her active little brain weaving the most grotesque fancies, a drowsiness stole over her. She was crooning to herself fainter and fainter, and every instant drifting nearer to the shadowy reefs on the western coast of Nowhere, when she heard a soft, inexplicable rustling sound close at her side. Mildred lifted her head quickly, just in time to behold Heliogabalus describe a graceful curve in the air and land lightly in the midst of her best Dresden china teaset.

"Ho, ho!" he cried, in a voice preternaturally gruff for an individual not above five inches in height. "Ho, ho!" And he immediately began to throw Mildred's cups and saucers and plates all about the apartment.

"Oh, you horrid, wicked little man!" cried Mildred, starting to her feet. "Stop it!"

"Oh, you cross little girl!" returned the dwarf, with his family leer. "You surprise me!" And another plate crashed against the blue-flowered wall-paper.

"Stop it!" she repeated; and then to herself, "It 's a mercy I waked up just when I did!"

[1] Referring to certain experiences of H. M. Stanley, the African explorer, given in his *In Darkest Africa*, published in 1890.

"Patience, my child; I 'm coming there shortly, to smooth your hair and kiss you."

"Do!" screamed Mildred, stooping to pick up a large Japanese crystal which lay absorbing the wintry sunlight at her feet.

When Heliogabalus saw that, he retired to the farther side of his tenement, peeping cautiously over the top and around the corner, and disappearing altogether whenever Mildred threatened to throw the crystal at him. Now Miss Wentworth was naturally a courageous girl, and when she perceived that the pygmy was afraid of her she resolved to make an example of him. He was such a small affair that it really did not seem worth while to treat him with much ceremony. He had startled her at first, his manners had been so very violent; but now that her pulse had gone down she regarded him with calm curiosity, and wondered what he would do next.

"Listen," he said presently, in a queer, deferential way, as he partly emerged from his hiding-place; "I came to request the hand of mademoiselle yonder," and, nodding his head in the direction of Blondella, the doll, he retreated bashfully.

"Her?" cried Mildred, aghast.

"*You* are very nice, but I can't marry out of my own set, you know," observed Heliogabalus, invisible behind his breastwork. This shyness was mere dissimulation, as his subsequent behavior proved.

"Who would have thought it!" murmured Mildred to herself; and as she glanced suspiciously at Blondella, sitting bolt upright between the windows, with her back against the mopboard, Mildred fancied that she could almost detect a faint roseate hue stealing into the waxen cheek. "Who would have thought it!"

And then, addressing Jumping Jack, she cried, "Come here directly; you audacious person!" and she stamped her foot in a manner that would have discouraged most suitors.

But Heliogabalus, who had now seated himself on the lid of his box and showed no trace of his late diffidence, smiled superciliously as he twisted off a bit of wire that protruded from the heel of one of his boots.

This effrontery increased Miss Wentworth's indignation, and likewise rather embarrassed her. Perhaps he was not afraid of her after all. In which case he was worth nothing as an example.

"I will brush you off, and tread on you," she observed tentatively, as if she were addressing an insect.

"Oh, indeed," he rejoined derisively, crossing his legs.

"I will!" cried Mildred, making an impulsive dash at him.

Though taken at a disadvantage the manikin eluded her with surprising ease. His agility was such as to render it impossible to determine whether he was an old young man or a very young old man. Mildred eyed him doubtfully for a moment, and then gave chase. Away went the quaint little figure, now darting under the brass bedstead, now dodging around the legs of the table, and now slipping between the feet of his pursuer at the instant she was on the point of laying hand on him. Owing doubtless to some peculiarity of his articulation, each movement of his limbs was accompanied by a rustling wiry sound like the faint reverberation of a banjo-string somewhere in the distance.

Heliogabalus may have been a person with no great

conversational gift, but his gymnastic acquirements were of the first order. Mildred not only could not catch him, but she could not restrain the manikin from meanwhile doing all kinds of desultory mischief; for in the midst of his course he would pause to overturn her tin kitchen, or shy a plate across the room, or give a vicious twitch to the lovely golden hair of Blondella, in spite of — perhaps in consequence of — his recent tender advances. It was plain that in eluding Mildred he was prompted by caprice rather than by fear.

"If things go on in this way," she reflected, "I sha'n't have anything left. If I could only get the dreadful little creature into a corner' There goes my tureen! What *shall* I do?"

To quit the room, even for a moment, in order to call for assistance at the head of the staircase, where, moreover, her voice was not likely to reach any one, was to leave everything at the mercy of that small demon. Mildred was out of breath with running, and ready to burst into tears with exasperation, when a different mode of procedure suggested itself to her. She would make believe that she was no longer angry, and possibly she could accomplish by cunning what she had failed to compass by violence. She would consent — at least seem to consent — to let him marry Blondella, though he had lately given no signs of a very fervid attachment. Beyond this Mildred had no definite scheme, when the story of the Fisherman and the Evil Afrite flashed upon her memory from the pages of the Arabian Nights. Her dilemma was exactly that of the unlucky fisherman, and her line of action should be the same, with such modification as the exigencies might demand. As in his case, too,

there was no time to be lost. An expression of ineffable benevolence and serenity instantly overspread the features of Miss Wentworth. She leaned against the wardrobe, and regarded Jumping Jack with a look of gentle reproach.

"I thought you were going to be interesting," she remarked softly.

"Ain't I interesting?" asked the goblin, with a touch of pardonable sensitiveness.

"No," said Mildred candidly, "you are not. Perhaps you try to be. That 's something, to be sure, though it 's not everything. Oh, *I* don't want to touch you," she went on, with an indifferent toss of her curls. "How old are you?"

"Ever so old and ever so young."

"Truly? How very odd to be both at once! Can you read?"

"Never tried."

"I 'm afraid your parents did n't bring you up very well," reflected Mildred.

"I speak all languages. The little folk of every age and every country understand me."

"You 're a great traveller, then."

"I should say so!"

"You don't seem to carry much baggage about with you. I suppose you belong somewhere, and keep your clothes there. I really should like to know where you came from, if it 's all the same to you."

"Out of that box, my dove," replied Jumping Jack, having become affable in his turn.

"Never!" exclaimed Mildred, with a delightful air of incredulity.

"I hope I may die," declared Heliogabalus, laying one hand on the left breast of his mainspring.

"I don't believe it," said Mildred confidently.

"Ho, ho!"

"You are too tall, and too wide, and too — fluffy. I don't mean to hurt your feelings, but you *are* fluffy. And I just want you to stop that ho-hoing. No; *I* don't believe it."

"You don't, don't you? Behold!" And placing both hands on the floor, Heliogabalus described a circle in the air, and neatly landed himself in the box.

He was no sooner in than Mildred clapped down the lid, and seated herself upon it victoriously. In the suddenness of her movement she had necessarily neglected to fasten the catch; but that was a detail that could be attended to later. Meanwhile she was mistress of the situation and could dictate terms. One thing was resolved: Jumping Jack was never to jump again. To-morrow he should be thrown into the Charles at the foot of Mount Vernon Street, in order that the tide might carry him out to sea. What would she not have given if she could have sealed him up with that talismanic Seal of Solomon which held the cruel marid so securely in his brazen casket? Of course it was not in Mildred's blood to resist the temptation to tease her captive a little.

"Now, Mr. Jack, I guess I've got you where you belong. If you are not an old man this very minute, you will be when you get out. You wanted to carry off my Blondella, did you? The idea! I hope you're quite comfortable."

"Let me out!" growled Heliogabalus in his deepest bass.

"I could n't think of it, dear. You are one of those little boys that should n't be *either* seen or heard; and

I don't want you to speak again, for I 'm sitting on your head, and your voice goes right through me. So you will please remember not to speak unless you are spoken to." And Mildred broke into the merriest laugh imaginable, recollecting how many times she herself had been extinguished by the same instructions.

But Mildred's triumph was premature, for the little man in the box was as strong as a giant in a dime museum; and now that he had fully recovered his breath, he began pushing in a most systematic manner with his head and shoulders, and Mildred, to her great consternation, found herself being slowly lifted up on the lid of the box, do what she might. In a minute or two more she must inevitably fall off, and Jumping Jack would have her! And what mercy could she expect at his hands, after her treatment of him! She was lost! Mildred stretched out her arms in despair, gave a shriek, and opened her eyes, which had been all the while as tightly shut as a couple of morning-glories at sundown.

She was sitting on a rug in the middle of the room. Though the window-panes were still flushed with the memory of the winter sunset, the iridescent lights had faded out in the Japanese crystal at her feet. She was not anywhere near the little imp. There he was over by the fireplace, staring at nothing in his usual senseless fashion. Not a piece of crockery had been broken, not a chair upset, and Blondella, the too fascinating Blondella, had not had a single tress disarranged.

Mildred drew a long breath of relief. What had happened? Had she been dreaming? She was unable to answer the question; but as she abstractedly

shook out the creases in the folds of her skirt, she remarked to herself that she did not care, on the whole, to have any of her things come to life, certainly not Jumping Jack. Just then the splintering of an icicle on the window-ledge outside sent a faint whiteness into her cheek, and caused her to throw a quick, apprehensive glance toward the fireplace. After an instant's hesitation, Mildred, unconsciously dragging Blondella by the hair, stole softly from the room, where the spectres of the twilight were beginning to gather rather menacingly, and went downstairs to join the family and relate her strange adventure.

The analysis of Miss Wentworth's dream — if it were a dream, for later on she declared it was not, and hurriedly gave Heliogabalus to an unpleasant small boy who lived next door — the analysis of her dream, I repeat, shows strong traces of a moral. Indeed, the residuum is purely of that stringent quality. Heliogabalus must be accepted as the symbol of an ill-considered desire realized. The earnestness with which Miss Wentworth invoked the phantasm and the misery that came of it are a common experience. Painfully to attain possession of what we do not want, and then painfully to waste our days in attempting to rid ourselves of it, seems to be a part of our discipline here below. I know a great many excellent persons who are spending the latter moiety of life in the endeavor to get their particular Jumping Jack snugly back into its box again.

GOLIATH.

It was raining — softly, fluently, persistently — raining as it rains on the afternoon of the morning when you hesitate a minute or two at the hat-stand, and finally decide not to take your umbrella down town with you. It was one of those fine rains — I am not praising it — which wet you to the skin in about four seconds. A sharp twenty-minutes' walk lay between my office in Court Street and my rooms in Huntington Avenue. I was standing meditatively in the doorway of the former establishment on the lookout for a hack or a herdic. An unusual number of these vehicles were hurrying in all directions, but as each approached within the arc of my observation the face of some fortunate occupant was visible through the blurred glass of the closed window.

Presently a coupé leisurely turned the corner, as if in search of a fare. I hailed the driver, and though he apparently took no notice of my gesture, the coupé slowed up and stopped, or nearly stopped, at the curbstone directly in front of me. I dashed across the narrow sidewalk, pulled open the door, and stepped into the vehicle. As I did so, some one else on the opposite side performed the same evolution, and we stood motionless for an instant with the crowns of our hats glued together. Then we seated ourselves simultaneously, each by this token claiming the priority of possession.

"I beg your pardon, sir," I said, "but this is my carriage."

"I beg *your* pardon, sir," was the equally frigid reply; "the carriage is mine."

"I hailed the man from that doorway," I said, with firmness.

"And I hailed him from the crossing."

"But I signalled him first."

My companion disdained to respond to that statement, but settled himself back on the cushions as if he had resolved to spend the rest of his life there.

"We will leave it to the driver," I said.

The subject of this colloquy now twisted his body round on the dripping box, and shouted —

"Where to, gentlemen?"

I lowered the plate glass, and addressed him —

"There 's a mistake here. This gentleman and I both claim the coupé. Which of us first called you?" But the driver "could n't tell t' other from which," as he expressed it. Having *two* fares inside, he of course had no wild desire to pronounce a decision that would necessarily cancel one of them.

The situation had reached this awkward phase when the intruder leaned forward and inquired, with a total change in his intonation —

"Are you not Mr. David Willis?"

"That is my name."

"I am Edwin Watson; we used to know each other slightly at college."

All along there had been something familiar to me in the man's face, but I had attributed it to the fact that I hated him enough at first sight to have known him intimately for ten years. Of course, after this, there was no further dispute about the carriage. Mr. Watson wanted to go to the Providence Station, which lay directly on the route to Huntington Avenue, and I was charmed to have his company. We fell into pleasant chat concerning the old Harvard days, and

were surprised when the coupé drew up in front of the red-brick clock-tower of the station.

The acquaintance, thus renewed by chance, continued. Though we had resided six years in the same city, and had not met before, we were now continually meeting — at the club, at the down-town restaurant where we lunched, at various houses where we visited in common. Mr. Watson was in the banking business; he had been married one or two years, and was living out of town, in what he called "a little box," on the slope of Blue Hill. He had once or twice invited me to run out to dine and spend the night with him, but some engagement or other disability had interfered. One evening, however, as we were playing billiards at the St. Botolph [1] I accepted his invitation for a certain Tuesday. Watson, who was having a vacation at the time, was not to accompany me from town, but was to meet me with his pony-cart at Green Lodge, a small flag-station on the Providence railroad, two or three miles from The Briers, the name of his place.

"I shall be proud to show you my wife," he said, "and the baby — and Goliath."

"Goliath?"

"That's the dog," answered Watson, with a laugh. "You and Goliath ought to meet — David and Goliath!" [2]

If Watson had mentioned the dog earlier in the conversation I might have shied at his hospitality. I may as well at once confess that I do not like dogs, and am afraid of them. Of some things I am not afraid; there have been occasions when my courage

[1] A Boston club-house.

[2] See 1 Samuel, xvii.

was not to be doubted — for example, the night I secured the burglar in my dining-room, and held him until the police came; and notably the day I had an interview with a young bull in the middle of a pasture, where there was not so much as a burdock leaf to fly to; with my red silk pocket-handkerchief I deployed him as coolly as if I had been a professional *matador*.[1] I state these unadorned facts in no vainglorious mood. If that burglar had been a collie, or that bull a bull-terrier, I should have collapsed on the spot.

No man can be expected to be a hero in all directions. Doubtless Achilles himself had his secret little cowardice, if truth were known. That acknowledged vulnerable heel of his was perhaps not his only weak point.[2] While I am thus covertly drawing a comparison between myself and Achilles, I will say that that same extreme sensitiveness of heel is also unhappily mine; for nothing so sends a chill into it, and thence along my vertebræ, as to have a strange dog come up sniffing behind me. Some inscrutable instinct has advised all strange dogs of my antipathy and pusillanimity.

> "The little dogs and all,
> Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me."[3]

They sally forth from picturesque verandas and unsuspected hidings, to show their teeth as I go by. In a spot where there is no dog, one will germinate if he happens to find out that I am to pass that way. Some-

[1] The Spanish bull-fighter who is appointed to kill the bull.

[2] Achilles, the bravest of the Greeks who fought against Troy, had in his infancy been plunged by his mother, the sea-goddess, Thetis, into the river Styx, thus becoming invulnerable, save in the heel by which he was held.

[3] Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Act III. Sc. 6.

times they follow me for miles. Strange dogs that wag their tails at other persons growl at me from over fences, and across vacant lots, and at street corners.

"So you keep a dog?" I remarked carelessly, as I dropped the spot-ball into a pocket.

"Yes," returned Watson. "What is a country-place without a dog?"

I said to myself, "I know what a country-place is *with* a dog; it's a place I should prefer to avoid."

But as I had accepted the invitation, and as Watson was to pick me up at Green Lodge station, and, presumably, see me safely into the house, I said no more.

Living as he did on a lonely road, and likely at any hour of the night to have a burglar or two drop in on him, it was proper that Watson should have a dog on the grounds. In any event he would have done so, for he had always had a maniacal passion for the canine race. I remember his keeping at Cambridge a bull-pup that was the terror of the neighborhood. He had his rooms outside the college yard in order that he might reside with this fiend. A good mastiff or a good collie — if there are any good collies and good mastiffs — is perhaps a necessity to exposed country-houses; but what is the use of allowing him to lie around loose on the landscape, as is generally done? He ought to be chained up until midnight. He should be taught to distinguish between a burglar and an inoffensive person passing along the highway with no intention of taking anything but the air. Men with a taste for dogs owe it to society not to cultivate dogs that have an indiscriminate taste for men.

The Tuesday on which I was to pass the night with Watson was a day simply packed with evil omens.

The feathered cream at breakfast struck the keynote of the day's irritations. Everything went at cross-purposes in the office, and at the last moment a telegram imperatively demanding an answer nearly caused me to miss that six o'clock train — the only train that stopped at Green Lodge. There were two or three thousand other trains which did not stop there. I was in no frame of mind for rural pleasures when I finally seated myself in the "six o'clock accommodation" with my gripsack beside me.

The run from town to Green Lodge is about twenty-five minutes, and the last stoppage before reaching that station is at Readville. We were possibly half-way between these two points when the train slackened and came to a dead halt amid some ragged woodland. Heads were instantly thrust out of the windows right and left, and everybody's face was an interrogation. Presently a brakeman, with a small red flag in his hand, stationed himself some two hundred yards in the rear of the train, in order to prevent the evening express from telescoping us. Then our engine sullenly detached itself from the tender, and disappeared. What had happened? An overturned gravel-car lay across the track a quarter of a mile beyond. It was fully an hour before the obstruction was removed, and our engine had backed down again to its coupling. I smiled bitterly, thinking of Watson and his dinner.

The station at Green Lodge consists of a low platform upon which is a shed covered on three sides with unpainted deal boards hacked nearly to pieces by tramps. In autumn and winter the wind here, sweeping across the wide Neponset marshes, must be cruel. That is probably why the tramps have destroyed their only decent shelter between Readville and Canton.

On this evening in early June, as I stepped upon the platform, the air was merely a ripple and a murmur among the maples and willows.

I looked around for Watson and the pony-cart. What had occurred was obvious. He had waited an hour for me, and then driven home with the conviction that the train must have passed before he got there, and that I, for some reason, had failed to come on it. The capsized gravel-car was an episode of which he could have known nothing.

A walk of three miles was not an inspiriting prospect, and would not have been even if I had had some slight idea of where The Briers was, or where I was myself. At one side of the shed, and crossing the track at right angles, ran a straight, narrow road that quickly lost itself in an arbor of swamp-willows. Beyond the tree-tops rose the serrated line of the Blue Hills, now touched with the twilight's tenderest amethyst. Over there, in that direction somewhere, lay Watson's domicile.

"What I ought to have done to-day," I reflected, "was to stay in bed. This is one of the days when I am unfitted to move among my fellow-men, and cope with the complexities of existence."

Just then my ear caught the sound of a cart-wheel grating on an unoiled axle. It was a withered farmer in a rickety open wagon slowly approaching the railroad track, and going toward the hills — my own intended destination. I stopped the man and explained my dilemma. He was willing, after a suspicious inventory of my person, to give me a lift to the end of the Green Lodge road. There I could take the old turnpike. He believed that the Watson place was half a mile or so down the turnpike toward Milton way. I climbed up beside him with alacrity.

Beyond giving vent to a sneeze or two left over from the previous winter, the old man made no sign of life as we drove along. He seemed to be in a state of suspended animation. I was as little disposed to talk.

It was a balmy evening, the air was charged with sweet wood-scents, and here and there a star half opened an eyelid on the peaceful dusk. After the frets of the day, it was soothing thus to be drawn at a snail's pace through the fragrance and stillness of that fern-fringed road, with the night weaving and unweaving its mysteries of light and shade on either side. Now and then the twitter of an oriole in some pendent nest overhead added, as it were, to the silence. I was yielding myself up wholly to the glamour of the time and place, when suddenly I thought of Goliath. At that moment Goliath was probably prowling about Watson's front yard seeking whom he might devour; and I was that predestined nourishment.

I knew what sort of watch-dog Watson would be likely to keep. There was a tough streak in Watson himself, a kind of thoroughbred obstinacy — the way he had held on to that coupé months before illustrated it. An animal with a tenacious grip, and on the verge of hydrophobia, was what would naturally commend itself to his liking. He had specified Goliath, but may be he had half a dozen other dragons to guard his hillside Hesperides.[1] I had depended on Watson meeting me at the station, and now, when I was no longer expected, I was forced to invade his premises

[1] The golden apples growing in the gardens of the Hesperides were guarded by a monstrous reptile with a hundred heads. See "The Three Golden Apples" in Hawthorne's *Wonder-Book*.

in the darkness of the night, and run the risk of being torn limb from limb before I could make myself known to the family. I recalled Watson's inane remark, "You and Goliath ought to meet — David and Goliath!" It now struck me as a most unseemly and heartless pleasantry.

These reflections were not calculated to heighten my enjoyment of the beauties of nature. The gathering darkness, with its few large, liquid stars, which a moment before had seemed so poetical, began to fill me with apprehension. In the daylight one has resources, but what on earth was I going to do in the dark with Goliath, and, likely enough, a couple of bloodhounds at my throat? I wished myself safely back among the crowded streets and electric lights of the city. In a few minutes more I was to be left alone and defenceless on a dismal highway.

When we reached the junction of the Green Lodge road and the turnpike, I felt that I was parting from the only friend I had in the world. The man had not spoken two words during the drive, and now rather gruffly refused my proffered half-dollar; but I would have gone home with him if he had asked me. I hinted that it would be much to his pecuniary advantage if he were willing to go so far out of his course as the door-step of Mr. Watson's house; but either because wealth had no charms for him, or because he had failed to understand my proposition, he made no answer, and, giving his mare a slap with the ends of the reins, rattled off into space.

On turning into the main road I left behind me a cluster of twinkling lights emitted from some dozen or twenty little cottages, which, as I have since been told, constitute the village of Ponkapog. It was ap-

parently alive with dogs. I heard them going off, one after another, like a string of Chinese crackers, as the ancient farmer with his creaking axle passed on through the village. I was not reluctant to leave so alert a neighborhood, whatever destiny awaited me beyond.

Fifteen or twenty minutes later I stood in front of what I knew at a glance to be The Briers, for Watson had described it to me. The three sharp gables of his description had not quite melted into the blackness which was rapidly absorbing every object; and there too, but indistinct, were the twin stone gate-posts with the cheerful Grecian vases on top, like the entrance to a cemetery.

I cautiously approached the paling and looked over into the inclosure. It was gloomy with shrubbery, dwarf spruces, and Norway pines, and needed nothing but a few obelisks and lachrymal urns to complete the illusion. In the centre of the space rose a circular mound of several yards in diameter, piled with rocks, on which probably were mosses and nasturtiums. It was too dark to distinguish anything clearly; even the white gravel walk encircling the mound left one in doubt. The house stood well back on a slight elevation, with two or three steps leading down from the piazza to the walk. Here and there a strong light illumined a lattice-window. I particularly noticed one on the ground floor in an ell of the building, a wide window with diamond-shaped panes — the dining-room. The curtains were looped back, and I could see the pretty housemaid in her cap coming and going. She was removing the dinner things: she must have long ago taken away *my* unused plate.

The contrast between a brilliantly lighted, luxuri-

ous interior and the bleak night outside is a contrast that never appeals to me in vain. I seldom have any sympathy for the outcast in sentimental fiction until the inevitable moment when the author plants her against the area-railing under the windows of the paternal mansion. I like to have this happen on an inclement Christmas or Thanksgiving eve — and it always does.

But even on a pleasant evening in early June it is not agreeable to find one 's self excluded from the family circle, especially when one has travelled fifteen miles to get there. I regarded the inviting façade of Watson's villa, and then I contemplated the sombre and unexplored tract of land which I must needs traverse in order to reach the door-step. How still it was! The very stillness had a sort of menace in it. My imagination peopled those black interstices under the trees with "Gorgons and Hydras and Chimæras dire."[1] There certainly was an air of latent dog about the place, though as yet no dog had developed. However, unless I desired to rouse the inmates from their beds, I saw that I ought to announce myself without much further delay. I softly opened the gate, which, having a heavy ball-and-chain attachment, immediately slipped from my hand and slammed to with a bang as I stepped within.

I was not surprised, but I was paralyzed all the same, at instantly hearing the familiar sound of a watch-dog suddenly rushing from his kennel. The kennel in this instance was on a piazza: a convenient arrangement — for the dog — in case of visitors.

The next sound I heard was the scrabble of the animal's four paws as he landed on the gravelled path

[1] Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book II., line 628.

way. There he hesitated, irresolute, as if he were making up his diabolical mind which side of the mound he would take. He neither growled nor barked in the interim, being evidently one of those wide-mouthed reticent brutes that mean business and indulge in no vain flourish.

I held my breath, and waited. Presently I heard him stealthily approaching me on the left. I at once hastened up the right-hand path, having tossed my gripsack in his direction, with the hope that while he was engaged in tearing it to pieces, I might possibly be able to reach the piazza and ring the door-bell.

My ruse failed, however, and the gripsack, which might have served as a weapon of defence, had been sacrificed. The dog continued his systematic approach, and I was obliged to hurry past the piazza-steps. A few seconds brought me back to the point of my departure. Superficially considered, the garden-gate, which now lay at my hand, offered a facile mode of escape; but I was ignorant of the fastenings; I had forgotten which way it swung; besides, it was unfortunately necessary that I should continue on my circular journey.

So far as I could judge, the dog was now about three yards in my rear; I was unable to see him, but I could plainly detect his quick respiration, and his deliberate footfalls on the gravel. I wondered why he did not spring upon me at once; but he knew he had his prey, he knew I was afraid of him, and he was playing with me as a cat plays with a mouse. In certain animals there is a refinement of cruelty which sometimes makes them seem almost human. If I believed in the transmigration of souls, I should say

that the spirit of Caligula[1] had passed into dogs, and that of Cleopatra[2] into cats.

It is easily conceivable that I made no such reflection at the moment, for by this time my brisk trot had turned into a run, and I was spinning around the circle at the rate of ten miles an hour, with the dog at my heels. Now I shot by the piazza, and now past the gate, until presently I ceased to know which was the gate and which the piazza. I believe that I shouted "Watson!" once or twice, no doubt at the wrong place, but I do not remember. At all events, I failed to make myself heard. My brain was in such confusion that at intervals I could not for the soul of me tell whether I was chasing the dog, or the dog was chasing me. Now I almost felt his nose at my heel, and now I seemed upon the point of trampling him underfoot.

My swift rotatory movement, combined with the dinner which I had not had, soon induced a sort of vertigo. It was a purely unreasoning instinct that prevented me from flying off at a tangent and plunging into the shrubbery. Strange lights began to come into my eyes, and in one of those phosphorescent gleams I saw a shapeless black object lying, or crouching, in my path. I automatically kicked it into the outer darkness. It was only my derby hat, which had fallen off on one of the previous trips.

I have spoken of the confused state of my mind. The right lobe of my brain had suspended all natural action, but with the other lobe I was enabled to speculate on the probable duration of my present career.

[1] The fourth of the twelve Cæsars — a monster of cruelty.

[2] The beautiful Queen of Egypt, the last sovereign of that country before its conquest by the Romans.

In spite of my terror, an ironical smile crept to my lips as I reflected that I might perhaps keep this thing up until sunrise, unless a midnight meal was one of the dog's regular habits. A prolonged angry snarl now and then admonished me that his patience was about exhausted.

I had accomplished the circuit of the mound for the tenth — possibly the twentieth — time (I cannot be positive), when the front door of the villa was opened with a jerk, and Watson, closely followed by the pretty housemaid, stepped out upon the piazza. He held in his hand a German student-lamp, which he came within an ace of dropping as the light fell upon my countenance.

"Good heavens! Willis; is this you? Where did you tumble from? What's become of your hat? How did you get *here?*"

"Six o'clock train — Green Lodge — white horse — old man — I" —

Suddenly the pretty housemaid descended the steps and picked up from the gravelled path a little panting, tremulous wad of something — not more than two handfuls at most — which she folded tenderly to her bosom.

"What's that?" I asked.

"That's Goliath," said Watson.

THE CRUISE OF THE DOLPHIN.[1]

EVERY Rivermouth boy looks upon the sea as being in some way mixed up with his destiny. While he is yet a baby lying in his cradle, he hears the dull, far-

[1] An episode from *The Story of a Bad Boy*, the narrator being Tom Bailey, the hero of the tale.

off boom of the breakers; when he is older, he wanders by the sandy shore, watching the waves that come plunging up the beach like white-maned sea-horses, as Thoreau calls them; his eye follows the lessening sail as it fades into the blue horizon, and he burns for the time when he shall stand on the quarter-deck of his own ship, and go sailing proudly across that mysterious waste of waters.

Then the town itself is full of hints and flavors of the sea. The gables and roofs of the houses facing eastward are covered with red rust, like the flukes of old anchors; a salty smell pervades the air, and dense gray fogs, the very breath of Ocean, periodically creep up into the quiet streets and envelop everything. The terrific storms that lash the coast; the kelp and spars, and sometimes the bodies of drowned men, tossed on shore by the scornful waves; the shipyards, the wharves, and the tawny fleet of fishing-smacks yearly fitted out at Rivermouth — these things, and a hundred other, feed the imagination and fill the brain of every healthy boy with dreams of adventure. He learns to swim almost as soon as he can walk; he draws in with his mother's milk the art of handling an oar: he is born a sailor, whatever he may turn out to be afterwards.

To own the whole or a portion of a rowboat is his earliest ambition. No wonder that I, born to this life, and coming back to it with freshest sympathies, should have caught the prevailing infection. No wonder I longed to buy a part of the trim little sailboat Dolphin, which chanced just then to be in the market This was in the latter part of May.

Three shares, at five or six dollars each, I forge which, had already been taken by Phil Adams, Fred

In spite of my terror, an ironical smile crept to my lips as I reflected that I might perhaps keep this thing up until sunrise, unless a midnight meal was one of the dog's regular habits. A prolonged angry snarl now and then admonished me that his patience was about exhausted.

I had accomplished the circuit of the mound for the tenth — possibly the twentieth — time (I cannot be positive), when the front door of the villa was opened with a jerk, and Watson, closely followed by the pretty housemaid, stepped out upon the piazza. He held in his hand a German student-lamp, which he came within an ace of dropping as the light fell upon my countenance.

"Good heavens! Willis; is this you? Where did you tumble from? What's become of your hat? How did you get *here?*"

"Six o'clock train — Green Lodge — white horse — old man — I" —

Suddenly the pretty housemaid descended the steps and picked up from the gravelled path a little panting, tremulous wad of something — not more than two handfuls at most — which she folded tenderly to her bosom.

"What's that?" I asked.

"That's Goliath," said Watson.

THE CRUISE OF THE DOLPHIN.[1]

EVERY Rivermouth boy looks upon the sea as being in some way mixed up with his destiny. While he is yet a baby lying in his cradle, he hears the dull, far-

[1] An episode from *The Story of a Bad Boy*, the narrate Tom Bailey, the hero of the tale.

in the most emphatic terms, never to go out in the Dolphin without leaving the mast in the boat-house. This curtailed my anticipated sport, but the pleasure of having a pull whenever I wanted it remained. I never disobeyed the Captain's orders touching the sail, though I sometimes extended my row beyond the points he had indicated.

The river was dangerous for sailboats. Squalls, without the slightest warning, were of frequent occurrence; scarcely a year passed that three or four persons were not drowned under the very windows of the town, and these, oddly enough, were generally sea-captains, who either did not understand the river, or lacked the skill to handle a small craft.

A knowledge of such disasters, one of which I witnessed, consoled me somewhat when I saw Phil Adams skimming over the water in a spanking breeze with every stitch of canvas set. There were few better yachtsmen than Phil Adams. He usually went sailing alone, for both Langdon and Binny Wallace were under the same restrictions I was.

Not long after the purchase of the boat, we planned an excursion to Sandpeep Island, the last of the islands in the harbor. We purposed to start early in the morning, and return with the tide in the moonlight. Our only difficulty was to obtain a whole day's exemption from school, the customary half-holiday not being long enough for our picnic. Somehow, we could not work it; but fortune arranged it for us. I may say here, that, whatever else I did, I never played truant ("hookey" we called it) in my life.

One afternoon the four owners of the Dolphin exchanged significant glances when Mr. Grimshaw announced from the desk that there would be no school

the following day, he having just received intelligence of the death of his uncle in Boston. I was sincerely attached to Mr. Grimshaw, but I am afraid that the death of his uncle did not affect me as it ought to have done.

We were up before sunrise the next morning, in order to take advantage of the flood-tide, which waits for no man. Our preparations for the cruise were made the previous evening. In the way of eatables and drinkables, we had stored in the stern of the Dolphin a generous bag of hard-tack (for the chowder), a piece of pork to fry the cunners in, three gigantic apple pies (bought at Pettingil's), half a dozen lemons, and a keg of spring water — the last-named article we slung over the side, to keep it cool, as soon as we got under way. The crockery and the bricks for our camp-stove we placed in the bows with the groceries, which included sugar, pepper, salt, and a bottle of pickles. Phil Adams contributed to the outfit a small tent of unbleached cotton cloth, under which we intended to take our nooning.

We unshipped the mast, threw in an extra oar, and were ready to embark. I do not believe that Christopher Columbus, when he started on his rather successful voyage of discovery, felt half the responsibility and importance that weighed upon me as I sat on the middle seat of the Dolphin, with my oar resting in the rowlock. I wonder if Christopher Columbus quietly slipped out of the house without letting his estimable family know what he was up to? Charley Marden, whose father had promised to cane him if he ever stepped foot on sail or row boat, came down to the wharf in a sour-grape humor, to see us off. Nothing would tempt *him* to go out on the river in such a crazy

clam-shell of a boat. He pretended that he did not expect to behold us alive again, and tried to throw a wet blanket over the expedition.

"Guess you'll have a squally time of it," said Charley, casting off the painter. "I'll drop in at old Newbury's" (Newbury was the parish undertaker) "and leave word, as I go along!"

"Bosh!" muttered Phil Adams, sticking the boat-hook into the string-piece of the wharf, and sending the Dolphin half a dozen yards towards the current.

How calm and lovely the river was! Not a ripple stirred on the glassy surface, broken only by the sharp cutwater of our tiny craft. The sun, as round and red as an August moon, was by this time peering above the water-line.

The town had drifted behind us, and we were entering among the group of islands. Sometimes we could almost touch with our boat-hook the shelving banks on either side. As we neared the mouth of the harbor, a little breeze now and then wrinkled the blue water, shook the spangles from the foliage, and gently lifted the spiral mist-wreaths that still clung alongshore. The measured dip of our oars and the drowsy twitterings of the birds seemed to mingle with, rather than break, the enchanted silence that reigned about us.

The scent of the new clover comes back to me now, as I recall that delicious morning when we floated away in a fairy boat down a river like a dream!

The sun was well up when the nose of the Dolphin nestled against the snow-white bosom of Sandpeep Island. This island, as I have said before, was the last of the cluster, one side of it being washed by the sea. We landed on the river-side, the sloping sands

and quiet water affording us a good place to moor the boat.

It took us an hour or more to transport our stores to the spot selected for the encampment. Having pitched our tent, using the five oars to support the canvas, we got out our lines, and went down the rocks seaward to fish. It was early for cunners, but we were lucky enough to catch as nice a mess as ever you saw. A cod for the chowder was not so easily secured. At last Binny Wallace hauled in a plump little fellow clustered all over with flaky silver.

To skin the fish, build our fireplace, and cook the chowder kept us busy the next two hours.

The fresh air and the exercise had given us the appetites of wolves, and we were about famished by the time the savory mixture was ready for our clam-shell saucers.

I shall not insult the rising generation on the seaboard by telling them how delectable is a chowder compounded and eaten in this Robinson Crusoe fashion. As for the boys who live inland, and know not of such marine feasts, my heart is full of pity for them. What wasted lives! Not to know the delights of a clambake, not to love chowder, to be ignorant of lobscouse!

How happy we were, we four, sitting cross-legged in the crisp salt grass, with the invigorating seabreeze blowing gratefully through our hair! What a joyous thing was life, and how far off seemed death — death, that lurks in all pleasant places, and was so near!

The banquet finished, Phil Adams drew from his pocket a handful of sweet-fern cigars; but as none of the party could indulge without imminent risk of

becoming ill, we all, on one pretext or another, declined, and Phil smoked by himself.

The wind had freshened by this, and we found it comfortable to put on the jackets which had been thrown aside in the heat of the day. We strolled along the beach and gathered large quantities of the fairy-woven Iceland moss, which at certain seasons is washed to these shores; then we played at ducks and drakes, and then, the sun being sufficiently low, we went in bathing.

Before our bath was ended a slight change had come over the sky and sea; fleecy-white clouds scudded here and there, and a muffled moan from the breakers caught our ears from time to time. While we were dressing, a few hurried drops of rain came lisping down, and we adjourned to the tent to wait the passing of the squall.

"We 're all right, anyhow," said Phil Adams. "It won't be much of a blow, and we 'll be as snug as a bug in a rug, here in the tent, particularly if we have that lemonade which some of you fellows were going to make."

By an oversight, the lemons had been left in the boat. Binny Wallace volunteered to go for them.

"Put an extra stone on the painter, Binny," said Adams, calling after him; "it would be awkward to have the Dolphin give us the slip and return to port minus her passengers."

"That it would," answered Binny, scrambling down the rocks.

Sandpeep Island is diamond-shaped — one point running out into the sea, and the other looking towards the town. Our tent was on the river-side. Though the Dolphin was also on the same side, she

lay out of sight by the beach at the farther extremity of the island.

Binny Wallace had been absent five or six minutes when we heard him calling our several names in tones that indicated distress or surprise, we could not tell which. Our first thought was, "The boat has broken adrift!"

We sprung to our feet and hastened down to the beach. On turning the bluff which hid the mooring-place from our view, we found the conjecture correct. Not only was the Dolphin afloat, but poor little Binny Wallace was standing in the bows with his arms stretched helplessly towards us — *drifting out to sea!*

"Head the boat inshore!" shouted Phil Adams.

Wallace ran to the tiller; but the slight cockle-shell merely swung round and drifted broadside on. Oh, if we had but left a single scull in the Dolphin!

"Can you swim it?" cried Adams desperately, using his hand as a speaking-trumpet, for the distance between the boat and the island widened momently.

Binny Wallace looked down at the sea, which was covered with white caps, and made a despairing gesture. He knew, and we knew, that the stoutest swimmer could not live forty seconds in those angry waters.

A wild, insane light came into Phil Adams's eyes, as he stood knee-deep in the boiling surf, and for an instant I think he meditated plunging into the ocean after the receding boat.

The sky darkened, and an ugly look stole rapidly over the broken surface of the sea.

Binny Wallace half rose from his seat in the stern, and waved his hand to us in token of farewell. In

spite of the distance, increasing every moment, we could see his face plainly. The anxious expression it wore at first had passed. It was pale and meek now, and I love to think there was a kind of halo about it, like that which painters place around the forehead of a saint. So he drifted away.

The sky grew darker and darker. It was only by straining our eyes through the unnatural twilight that we could keep the Dolphin in sight. The figure of Binny Wallace was no longer visible, for the boat itself had dwindled to a mere white dot on the black water. Now we lost it, and our hearts stopped throbbing; and now the speck appeared again, for an instant, on the crest of a high wave.

Finally it went out like a spark, and we saw it no more. Then we gazed at one another, and dared not speak.

Absorbed in following the course of the boat, we had scarcely noticed the huddled inky clouds that sagged heavily all around us. From these threatening masses, seamed at intervals with pale lightning, there now burst a heavy peal of thunder that shook the ground under our feet. A sudden squall struck the sea, ploughing deep white furrows into it, and at the same instant a single piercing shriek rose above the tempest — the frightened cry of a gull swooping over the island. How it startled us!

It was impossible any longer to keep our footing on the beach. The wind and the breakers would have swept us into the ocean if we had not clung to one another with the desperation of drowning men. Taking advantage of a momentary lull, we crawled up the sands on our hands and knees, and, pausing in the lee of the granite ledge to gain breath, returned to the

camp, where we found that the gale had snapped all the fastenings of the tent but one. Held by this, the puffed-out canvas swayed in the wind like a balloon. It was a task of some difficulty to secure it, which we did by beating down the canvas with the oars.

After several trials, we succeeded in setting up the tent on the leeward side of the ledge. Blinded by the vivid flashes of lightning, and drenched by the rain, which fell in torrents, we crept, half dead with fear and anguish, under our flimsy shelter. Neither the anguish nor the fear was on our own account, for we were comparatively safe, but for poor little Binny Wallace, driven out to sea in the merciless gale. We shuddered to think of him in that frail shell, drifting on and on to his grave, the sky rent with lightning over his head, and the green abysses yawning beneath him. We suddenly fell to crying, and cried I know not how long.

Meanwhile the storm raged with augmented fury. We were obliged to hold on to the ropes of the tent to prevent it blowing away. The spray from the river leaped several yards up the rocks and clutched at us malignantly. The very island trembled with the concussions of the sea beating upon it, and at times I fancied that it had broken loose from its foundation and was floating off with us. The breakers, streaked with angry phosphorus, were fearful to look at.

The wind rose higher and higher, cutting long slits in the tent, through which the rain poured incessantly. To complete the sum of our miseries, the night was at hand. It came down abruptly, at last, like a curtain, shutting in Sandpeep Island from all the world.

It was a dirty night, as the sailors say. The darkness was something that could be felt as well as seen

— it pressed down upon one with a cold, clammy touch. Gazing into the hollow blackness, all sorts of imaginable shapes seemed to start forth from vacancy — brilliant colors, stars, prisms, and dancing lights. What boy, lying awake at night, has not amused or terrified himself by peopling the spaces around his bed with these phenomena of his own eyes?

"I say," whispered Fred Langdon, at last, clutching my hand, "don't you see things — out there — in the dark?"

"Yes, yes — Binny Wallace's face!"

I added to my own nervousness by making this avowal; though for the last ten minutes I had seen little besides that star-pale face with its angelic hair and brows. First a slim yellow circle, like the nimbus round the moon, took shape and grew sharp against the darkness; then this faded gradually, and there was the Face, wearing the same sad, sweet look it wore when he waved his hand to us across the awful water. This optical illusion kept repeating itself.

"And I too," said Adams. "I see it every now and then, outside there. What would n't I give if it really was poor little Wallace looking in at us! O boys, how shall we dare to go back to the town without him? I've wished a hundred times, since we've been sitting here, that I was in his place, alive or dead!"

We dreaded the approach of morning as much as we longed for it. The morning would tell us all. Was it possible for the Dolphin to outride such a storm? There was a lighthouse on Mackerel Reef, which lay directly in the course the boat had taken when it disappeared. If the Dolphin had caught on this reef, perhaps Binny Wallace was safe. Perhaps

his cries had been heard by the keeper of the light. The man owned a life-boat, and had rescued several persons. Who could tell?

Such were the questions we asked ourselves again and again, as we lay huddled together waiting for day-break. What an endless night it was! I have known months that did not seem so long.

Our position was irksome rather than perilous; for the day was certain to bring us relief from the town, where our prolonged absence, together with the storm, had no doubt excited the liveliest alarm for our safety. But the cold, the darkness, and the suspense were hard to bear.

Our soaked jackets had chilled us to the bone. In order to keep warm we lay so closely that we could hear our hearts beat above the tumult of sea and sky.

After a while we grew very hungry, not having broken our fast since early in the day. The rain had turned the hard-tack into a sort of dough; but it was better than nothing.

We used to laugh at Fred Langdon for always carrying in his pocket a small vial of essence of peppermint or sassafras, a few drops of which, sprinkled on a lump of loaf-sugar, he seemed to consider a great luxury. I do not know what would have become of us at this crisis if it had not been for that omnipresent bottle of hot stuff. We poured the stinging liquid over our sugar, which had kept dry in a sardine-box, and warmed ourselves with frequent doses.

After four or five hours the rain ceased, the wind died away to a moan, and the sea — no longer raging like a maniac — sobbed and sobbed with a piteous human voice all along the coast. And well it might, after that night's work. Twelve sail of the Gloucester fish-

ing fleet had gone down with every soul on board, just outside of Whale's-Back Light. Think of the wide grief that follows in the wake of one wreck; then think of the despairing women who wrung their hands and wept, the next morning, in the streets of Glouces-ter, Marblehead, and Newcastle!

Though our strength was nearly spent, we were too cold to sleep. Once I sunk into a troubled doze, when I seemed to hear Charley Marden's parting words, only it was the Sea that said them. After that I threw off the drowsiness whenever it threatened to overcome me.

Fred Langdon was the earliest to discover a filmy, luminous streak in the sky, the first glimmering of sunrise.

"Look, it is nearly daybreak!"

While we were following the direction of his finger, a sound of distant oars fell upon our ears.

We listened breathlessly; and as the dip of the blades became more audible, we discerned two foggy lights, like will-o'-the-wisps, floating on the river.

Running down to the water's edge, we hailed the boats with all our might. The call was heard, for the oars rested a moment in the row-locks, and then pulled in towards the island.

It was two boats from the town, in the foremost of which we could now make out the figures of Captain Nutter and Binny Wallace's father. We shrunk back on seeing *him*.

"Thank God!" cried Mr. Wallace fervently, as he leaped from the wherry without waiting for the bow to touch the beach.

But when he saw only three boys standing on the sands, his eye wandered restlessly about in quest of

the fourth; then a deadly pallor overspread his features.

Our story was soon told. A solemn silence fell upon the crowd of rough boatmen gathered round, interrupted only by a stifled sob from one poor old man who stood apart from the rest.

The sea was still running too high for any small boat to venture out; so it was arranged that the wherry should take us back to town, leaving the yawl, with a picked crew, to hug the island until daybreak, and then set forth in search of the Dolphin.

Though it was barely sunrise when we reached town, there were a great many persons assembled at the landing eager for intelligence from missing boats. Two picnic parties had started down river the day before, just previous to the gale, and nothing had been heard of them. It turned out that the pleasure-seekers saw their danger in time, and ran ashore on one of the least exposed islands, where they passed the night. Shortly after our own arrival they appeared off Rivermouth, much to the joy of their friends, in two shattered, dismasted boats.

The excitement over, I was in a forlorn state, physically and mentally. Captain Nutter put me to bed between hot blankets, and sent Kitty Collins for the doctor. I was wandering in my mind, and fancied myself still on Sandpeep Island: now we were building our brick stove to cook the chowder, and, in my delirium, I laughed aloud and shouted to my comrades; now the sky darkened, and the squall struck the island; now I gave orders to Wallace how to manage the boat, and now I cried because the rain was pouring in on me through the holes in the tent. Towards evening a high fever set in, and it was many days before my

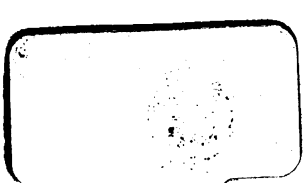
grandfather deemed it prudent to tell me that the Dolphin had been found, floating keel upwards, four miles southeast of Mackerel Reef.

Poor little Binny Wallace! How strange it seemed, when I went to school again, to see that empty seat in the fifth row! How gloomy the playground was, lacking the sunshine of his gentle, sensitive face! One day a folded sheet slipped from my algebra: it was the last note he ever wrote me. I could not read it for the tears.

What a pang shot across my heart the afternoon it was whispered through the town that a body had been washed ashore at Grave Point — the place where we bathed! We bathed there no more! How well I remember the funeral, and what a piteous sight it was afterwards to see his familiar name on a small headstone in the Old South Burying-Ground!

Poor little Binny Wallace! Always the same to me. The rest of us have grown up into hard, worldly men, fighting the fight of life; but you are forever young, and gentle, and pure; a part of my own childhood that time cannot wither; always a little boy, always poor little Binny Wallace!

10/21/30



10/21/30